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SUNDAY

# Saipan Tribune

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## OPINION METER

This week's poll:

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Emma Gardner says her design philosophy is simple: Stay away from trends and go with your own creative impulses.

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### Iraq Airstrikes

U.S. forces launch airstrikes in the southern city of Basra and fire a missile into the main Shiite stronghold in Baghdad.

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### Dead Soldiers

'There is something terribly wrong with our immigration policies if it takes death on the battlefield in order to earn citizenship.'

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Deleon Guerrero is cooking champ for 2nd time. **PAGE 2**

Guam soldier killed in Baghdad. **PAGE 3**

## Fate of power rate repeal now lies with Senate

By AGNES E. DONATO  
[agnes\\_donato@saipantribune.com](mailto:agnes_donato@saipantribune.com)  
REPORTER

House members are counting on the Senate to pass a bill repealing a law that re-

duced power rates in the Commonwealth.

Rep. Tina Sablan, one of bill's sponsors, said yesterday that passing the bill is a difficult political decision, but it "needs to be done."

"I am hopeful that they [senators] will see the gravity of the situation and act expeditiously," Sablan said in an interview yesterday.

Rep. Heinz Hofschneider, also a spon-

sor of the bill, expressed the same hope. "Everyday that we don't act to repeal that law means CUC will continue to burden the general fund," he said.

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## NMI faces brain drain

### NMI workers may flock to Guam for buildup

By MARK RABAGO  
[mark\\_rabago@saipantribune.com](mailto:mark_rabago@saipantribune.com)  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

If the CNMI economy continues at its sluggish pace, the Commonwealth may very well lose some of its best and brightest workers to neighboring Guam, which economy is expected to benefit from the relocation of 8,000 U.S. Marines and 9,000 of their dependents from Okinawa.

See **MILITARY** on Page 4



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

### 2008 ADVOCATES OF THE YEAR

CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities 2008 Advocate of the Year awardees gather for a photo with program officer Ruth Pangelinan and AT coordinator Pam Sablan during the awarding ceremony at the Pacific Islands Club Saturday. In photos are, from right, Family Advocate of the Year and Advocate of the Year Larissa Larson, Self Advocate of the Year Jason Teregeyo, Family Advocate of the Year Marissa F. Guerrero, Private Business Advocate of the Year Green Meadows Daycare represented by president Mila Merjilla, Public Entity of the Year Aqua Resort Club represented by Piding Sablan, Employer Advocate of the Year Pacific Islands Club represented by HR manager Tommy Kennington and HR director Angela Santos. Not in photo are, Community Member of the Year Bud White, Educator Advocate of the Year Ron Calvo, and Transportation Advocate of the Year Saipan Call-a-Ride represented by Lisa Ada-Aldan.

## HANMI favors non-smoking bill

By MARK RABAGO  
[mark\\_rabago@saipantribune.com](mailto:mark_rabago@saipantribune.com)  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands has thrown its weight behind a bill that seeks to outlaw smoking in restaurants, bars, and workplaces in the Northern Marianas.

In an interview Friday following the Saipan Chamber of Commerce monthly meeting, HANMI chair Lynn A. Knight said the organization has voted to endorse House Bill 16-47 sponsored by Rep. Justo S. Quitugua.

Knight

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## Is death estimate for Darfur too low?

By EDITH M. LEDERER  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—How many people have died in Darfur? Two years ago, the United Nations estimated 200,000. But the man who gave that figure now says it's far too low. Sudan has long said it's way too high.

See **DEATH** on Page 4

In this photo released by Albany Associates on Saturday, March 15, 2008, a Nigerian soldier with the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) stands guard at a checkpoint to the Mission's Western Sector headquarters, on the outskirts of the state capital of West Darfur, El Geneina, Sudan, Friday, March 14, 2008.

AP





# Around the CNMI

## Deleon Guerrero is cooking champ for 2nd time

Frank M. Deleon Guerrero won first place again at the 4th annual Cook A Rainbow Challenge held yesterday at the Sabalu Market in Susupe.

Deleon Guerrero's steamed fish with special taro sauce wowed judges and bested other eight participants.

All dishes were judged on taste, creative presentation, texture, use of fresh local ingredients and originality.

Glen Santos' Fish Escabeche took second place while Ivan Gatabonton won third place with his steamed fish.

The Cook A Rainbow Chal-

lenge—Cooking from our Reefs is held in conjunction with CNMI Nutrition Month and DEQ's Environmental Awareness Month. As 2008 is the Year of the Reef, the cooking participants were tasked to use a reef fish in addition to the "rainbow" of fruits and/or vegetables.

The contest was open to non-professionals who members of the community with no association to a restaurant or food service establishment.

The Cook A Rainbow Challenge is coordinated by the Ayuda Network, CNMI Dia-



The 2008 Cook A Rainbow first place winner, Frank Deleon Guerrero, with his Steamed Fish with Taro Sauce.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The 2008 Cook A Rainbow second place winner: an Escabeche concoction prepared by Glen Santos.

## Europe Highlights

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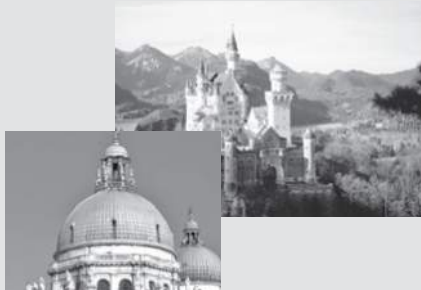
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Nutrition Service, DPH-Breast and Cervical Cancer Program and the Commonwealth Cancer Association. (DEQ)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

2008 Cook A Rainbow third place winner Ivan Gatabonton works on his winning recipe.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A fruit and vegetable "rainbow" basket is displayed at the 4th annual Cook A Rainbow Challenge held at the Sabalu Market in Susupe yesterday.



# Guam soldier killed in Baghdad

Another son of Guam has been killed after coming under hostile fire in Iraq.

Army Staff Sergeant Joseph D. Gamboa, formerly of Ded- edo, died Tuesday of wounds sustained from indirect fire in Baghdad, Iraq.

Gamboa was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, Vilseck, Germany.

According to the U.S. Army, Gamboa died of injuries sustained in Baghdad, when his position came under indirect fire on March 25, 2008.

Guam Rep. Madeleine Z. Bordallo issued a statement

upon receiving official notification from the U.S. Army of Gamboa's death: "Staff Sergeant Joseph D. Gamboa was a brave soldier who loved his family, his country, and our island. I join our community in mourning his loss, and in prayer for his wife, children, and family."

"Staff Sergeant Gamboa gave the ultimate sacrifice for his nation and we are deeply appreciative of his commitment to preserving our freedom. He inspires us with his selfless dedication and we honor him."

"On behalf of our island community, I have personally expressed deep condolences to the

family of Staff Sgt. Gamboa. I extend these same sympathies to all who knew and loved him. His service to our country and our island will be honored always," said Bordallo.

As of Friday, March 28, 2008, at least 4,005 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. The figure includes eight military civilians. At least 3,261 died as a result of hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The AP count is five more than the Defense Department's tally. *(With AP)*

## Torres will reconsider resignation if...

By AGNES E. DONATO  
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REPORTER

Rep. Stanley T. Torres says he will only revoke his resignation as a House committee chairman if his colleagues reconsider the confirmation of an appointee to the Public Utilities Commission.

"I am out of PUTC now," Torres said yesterday. "If they want me to reconsider my resignation, they will have to reconsider their vote on Kimberlyn Hinds."

Torres resigned as chairman of the House Committee of Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications because he felt the committee was pressured to "rubberstamp" the appointment of Kimberlyn King Hinds to the utility regulatory board.

Torres, along with three other House members, had wanted Hinds to go through a public hearing. But the majority declined and went ahead with a vote. He also believed that Hinds' ties with a Tinian water bottling company meant a potential conflict of interest.

House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios on Thursday expressed hope that Torres would reconsider his resignation.

But Torres, in an interview yesterday, stood firm on his decision.

Rep. Tina Sablan, one of the lawmakers who voted against Hinds' confirmation, agreed with Torres' sentiments. She said a public hearing would have provided an opportunity to clear the air on Hinds' appointment.

"Maybe there was no conflict of interest. But we won't know now," she said.

Sablan also took issue with the confirmation process as a whole. She expressed regret that many nominations are not being reviewed properly.

"These are serious positions we're filling in. The public should have an assurance that people are qualified to hold those positions," she said.

The creation of the Public Utilities Commission had suffered major delay because of the administration's difficulty in finding suitable appointees. Hinds' confirmation was necessary to bring PUC to a quorum. She joins Viola Alepuyo and Kyle Calabrese.

## Hearings set on land alienation changes

By AGNES E. DONATO  
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REPORTER

A series of public hearings will be held in the next two weeks on proposed constitutional amendments to the Commonwealth's land alienation law.

The House Committee on Natural Resources will conduct the hearings to receive testimony on House Legislatives 16-3, 16-4, 16-8, all of which relate to land alienation laws. The hearings will take place at the House chamber on Capital Hill, on April 2 and in the Multi Purpose Center on April 3.

Separate hearings will be held on April 9 and 10, at the House chamber and Multi Purpose Center, respectively, on House Legislative Initiative 16-8.

All events will begin at 6:30pm.

Public hearings will also be conducted on Tinian and Rota. The schedule are yet to be announced.

H.L.I. 16-3 will allow the government to tap at least US\$25 million generated through leasing public lands so that it can be funneled for the financially troubled Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

H.L.I. 16-4 proposes the extension of leasehold interest on private lands from 55 to 75 years.

H.L.I. 16-5 will allow the cash-strapped government to

borrow money from legitimate financial institutions for its operating expenses.

Rep. Heinz Hofschneider authored the three mentioned initiatives.

Sponsored by Rep. Victor B. Hocog, H.L.I. 16-8 seeks to allow each senatorial district to amend or repeal the restrictions on alienation of land with respect to its senatorial district.

Legislative initiatives have to be passed by the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members of each house present and voting. The governor cannot veto legislative initiatives, which are proposals to amend the Constitution.

Once passed by the Legislature, initiatives will be subject to voter ratification.

Members of the public may submit written or oral testimony at the hearings. They may also submit comments at Rep. Ramon Tebuteb's office at the Legislative Building on Capital Hill; mail to PO Box 500586 Saipan MP 95960; email rtebuteb@yahoo.com; or fax 664-8985.

Comments are due on April 10, 2008.

Copies of the initiatives may be downloaded from Rep. Joseph N. Camacho's website at [www.camachocnmi.com](http://www.camachocnmi.com). They are also available at the Legislative Bureau library (322-8840) or Rep. Tebuteb's office (664-8983).



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# Fund to agencies: Monitor pension contributions

The NMI Retirement Fund has advised government agencies to keep a proper accounting of pension contributions.

Fund administrator Mark A. Aguon said in a memorandum that retirement applications

of government employees are placed at risk because some employers fail to meet accounting standards.

Applications that lack documentation of accountability of employer contribution are con-

sidered incomplete and cannot be processed upon submission.

"Department and agency heads are urged to comply with their duty to monitor their employees' prospective retirement applications' needs

for strict accounting of these employer's contributions," Aguon said.

He also reminded departments and activity heads of their obligation to remit contributions. Some employers, he said,

have not made contributions to fund their employees' future retirement.

"The Fund cannot breach its duty to all its members, by depleting their respective complete contributions due to the in-

ability or unwillingness of other members' employers to forward their respective employer's contributions, along with the applicable interest charges for late contributions," Aguon said. *(Agnes E. Donato)*

## GCA begins enrollment for SY 2008 – '09

Registration for school year 2008-2009 at the Grace Christian Academy started for continuing students on March 3, 2008 and it will run until March 28, 2008.

Continuing students and their siblings are guaranteed a slot until April 18, 2008 if the maximum number of class enrollment is not reached yet. Classes will be limited to a maximum of 25 students only. Open enrollment begins on April 21, 2008.

Registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

GCA has been recently awarded re-accreditation by the International Accreditation Commission of Association of Christian Schools International, with the term of accreditation for Kindergarten to 12th grade effective July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2014.

GCA admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin. The same rights, privileges, programs and activities

are made available to all students at the school, regardless of their background.

As a ministry of Grace Christian Assembly, the school is committed to excellence in various aspects of the child's education. Students are encouraged to discover their God-given potentials and are provided rigorous programs and opportunities for Kindergarten 4 through 12th grade.

Interested families are encouraged to register on time as classes

have already been filling up quickly. Enrollment packet is available at the Registrar's office. The packet must be turned in along with all other required documents. A student is officially registered upon paying the registration fee and whose account is current.

Grace Christian Academy is located on Upper Navy Hill. For more information, contact the school at 322-3320/3850 or set up an appointment to visit the school. *(GCA)*

## 'Military buildup could mean mass migration to Guam'

From Page 1

This according to First Hawaiian Back economic consultant Dr. Leroy Laney, who served as guest speaker during Friday's Saipan Chamber of Commerce monthly meeting at the Saipan Grand Hotel.

Responding to a question posed by Northern Marianas College's Eric Plinske about the negative impact, if any, the Guam military buildup would have in the CNMI, Laney said workers leaving would be biggest problem.

"If there is no or very little job creation here and it all goes over there [Guam]—that's where all the job creation is, depending on

how long it lasts," he said.

In an interview with the Saipan Tribune after his presentation, the professor of Economic and Finance at the Hawaii Pacific University reiterated that line of thought.

"Maybe Guam is where people will go for jobs because there will be a lot of jobs over there. There will be a brain drain and a body drain," he said.

"I think there's more to do in Guam to employ people in the CNMI and immigrant workers in the Philippines and other countries. One of their big problems is not having enough labor and since the CNMI is right next door, it would seem to me that it's only logical that would

be a possible source of it."

Laney, however, said that the migration of CNMI workers to the northernmost part of the Mariana chain would likely be temporary. "The possibility is they would all come back after it's over; the [military buildup] won't last forever."

He added, "It's sort of like a hardening of the infrastructure and all this military housing, but it will not create permanent jobs. So it depends on how long it will be but certainly people do go where job opportunities are and jobs is one way to measure an economy."

Laney, who used to work under former Federal Reserve chair Allan Greenspan, also said that

the military's timeframe for the Guam military buildup (2010-2014) seems a little optimistic.

"Looks like it might be unrealistic and it's going to be hard to meet that timeframe but it is going to be positive for the Guam economy. When you talk about an order of magnitude like this it's really very hard to put any kind of precise estimate on real gross island product rates of growth," he said.

Laney added that he talked with people in the construction industry in Guam and they said if 2010 is the target date for the start of the military buildup in Guam, then the groundwork plan should have already been laid out by now.

## Hotel group favors non-smoking measure

From Page 1

"Everybody who responded to the survey said they are supporting the bill; nobody said they are against it. We didn't have a 100-percent response rate, though, but 100 percent of the people that answered supported it. And a number of them said they are already doing it on their own," Knight said in an interview with the *Saipan Tribune*.

She said she was quite surprised at how strongly the general managers felt about the issue. "I had comments from a number of them that they fully support the idea eliminating smoking in restaurants and bars and [hotel] lobbies."

Knight, however, said that one sticking point the hotel general managers want clarified is the issue on the number of smoking rooms hotels are allowed to retain.

"The only thing that they weren't sure about is that they would prefer not to have any quota on the number of smoking rooms and leave it up to the hotels to decide based on the needs of the guest. And I could see that as a very important question because if you're only allowed to designate 20 percent of your rooms but you have a lot of requests for them, you don't want to turn away business," she said.

Knight added that HANMI would prefer to allow the market

to dictate how many rooms hotels could designate as smoking rather than have the government just pick a number for them.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce, which advanced its April meeting to accommodate First Hawaiian Bank economic consultant Dr. Leroy Laney, said it is still waiting on the vote from its members.

House Bill 16-47, sponsored by Rep. Justo S. Quitugua, proposes to make public places smoke-free. Exemptions include open-air bars, hotel rooms, and outdoor jobsites.

In his 14-page bill, Quitugua cites a long list of studies concerning ill health effects of secondhand smoke. He also says analyses have shown a link

between a smoking ban and the profitability of restaurants and hotels.

"It is the duty of the Commonwealth Legislature to provide a healthy and safe environment for the people of the CNMI as well as for visitors to our islands. This includes establishing smoke-free public and work places for the benefit of all, and particularly for the elderly and children," Quitugua states in his bill.

He adds that a smoking ban will protect the public health and welfare, and guarantee the right of nonsmokers to breathe smoke-free air, and recognize that "the need to breathe smoke-free air shall have priority over the desire to smoke."

## Ball in Senate's court on power rate repeal

From Page 1

House Bill 16-79 passed the Lower House with a 17-1 vote on Thursday. Rep. Stanley T. Torres voted against the bill. Representatives Oscar M. Babauta and Ralph Torres were not present.

The bill proposes to repeal Public Law 15-94, which forced

power rates down to 17 cents per kWh in October 2007, and reduced or scrapped other charges for residential customers.

The law, compounded by the rising cost of fuel, has caused the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to face a shortfall of about \$1 million each month for fuel alone.

Due to the shortfall, CUC for instance failed to pay for a full 30-

day fuel supply last month. Power outages are now occurring partly because CUC is stretching to last for 30 days the 23-day supply that it managed to purchase.

Hofschneider said that the repealer bill would not only allow CUC to pay for full fuel deliveries, but also reduce government subsidy to the utility.

In addition, Sablan argued, the

customers would not lose much if P.L. 15-94 was repealed. The law, she noted, has not been of any real benefit to the customers, since emergency regulations were adopted to give CUC flexibility in setting the fuel component of the power rates.

House Bill 16-79 will become law once approved by the Senate and signed by the governor.

## Death estimates for Darfur vary widely

From Page 1

A new mortality survey might settle the question, but the U.N. has no plans for one—it is too busy trying to help the living. Activist groups say Sudan's government doesn't want one.

Former U.N. humanitarian chief Jan Egeland told The Associated Press he has no doubt that tens of thousands more people have died since he made the 200,000 estimate in 2006. He cited a dramatic increase in the number of people affected by the conflict and a surge in fighting.

But Egeland, now a special adviser to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, said only a large-scale mortality survey and access to areas where aid workers are unable to reach could provide an accurate death figure for the 5-year-old conflict.

Aid workers long have been prevented from reaching parts of Darfur because of Sudanese government obstruction and the unrelenting violence between ethnic African rebels and the janjaweed militias that support the Arab-dominated regime in Khartoum.

Sudan's government strongly disputes the figure of 200,000 deaths, contending the toll is a tiny fraction of that—less than 10,000.

Aid workers say Sudan's figure probably reflects people killed by bullets, but doesn't take into account all those who have died from hunger or disease tied to the upheaval of the conflict.

The last official, independent mortality survey for Darfur was released in March 2005 based on data collected from 8,844 displaced people living in camps by a team from the World Health Organization. It estimated 10,000 people had died among the refugees each month between the end of 2003 and October 2004—mostly of malnutrition and disease.

Egeland said when he was interviewed at the end of 2005, "I just added the 10,000 we found that died per month in 2004. ... I said well it's 18 months, it's 180,000." A few months later he raised it to 200,000.

"Then, the clock stopped ticking, sort of," he said in the AP interview earlier this month.

"You have the figure 200,000 people died in Darfur which has been used continuously since I gave it," Egeland added. "Please stop using that figure. I gave it. It's two and half years old. It's wrong."

Christina Bennett, a spokeswoman for Egeland's successor, Undersecretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs John Holmes, said the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has no plans for a new mortality survey.

"We're working as hard as we can to assist the living," she said. "It is likely that more than 200,000 people have died, but what we focus on is not the number of people who have died but the 4 million people who are needlessly suffering in Darfur."

Bennett said that to calculate the number of deaths in Darfur "would require a complex and thorough survey, which we feel under current circumstances would be extremely time consuming and expensive, and any real accuracy in those numbers would be impossible to achieve."

John Prendergast, co-chairman of the Washington-based Enough Project, which works to end genocide and crimes against humanity, countered that mortality studies can be done with a few epidemiologists and aren't that costly or time consuming.

"The problem is twofold: The government of Sudan does not want a new mortality study done for Darfur, and because of that the United Nations won't pursue it," he said Thursday.

Eric Reeves, a Sudan researcher and analyst at Smith College, agreed that the Sudanese government has no interest in a new mortality study.

"If we refuse to acknowledge that deaths are well in excess of 200,000—a figure that has grown very stale over the past one and a half years—we risk failing to understand how great the impending human destruction may be in Darfur and in eastern Chad," he told the AP.

The 4 million people in desperate need of aid represent nearly two-thirds of Darfur's estimated population of 6.5 million. Some 2.5 million of those in dire need live in refugee camps in Darfur and neighboring Chad, while the others are in remote villages, the U.N. says.

## Wharf contract aims for safe munitions handling in Guam

The Naval Facilities Engineering Command Pacific awarded IBC/TOA Corp. Joint Venture, Barrigada, Guam a \$40 million, firm-fixed price contract Friday for construction of a new ammunition wharf for Commander, Naval Forces Marianas.

An additional \$43.8 million will be funded upon the passage of the fiscal year 2009 military construction appropriations bill. The contract also contains one option for \$171,000, which may be exercised within twelve months of the contract award, bringing the total cumulative value of the contract to a little more than \$84 million.

The project will provide for a new 400-foot extension to the existing Kilo wharf, and the company will perform all necessary dredging within the harbor to enable the construction. The project will also provide for reinforced concrete crane girders and supports at the existing wharf and the new wharf extension.

"This project will provide over 50,000 additional square feet of wharf area, and it improves the Navy's ability to safely and efficiently unload and re-supply modern ordnance ships by increasing the area for receipt and handling of munitions, said Lt. Cmdr. Eric Hawn, Assistant

Regional Engineer, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Marianas. "This results in an economized handling process, and a reduced on-station time."

Construction work will strengthen the existing wharf, and will upgrade roads, electrical, water, and sewer services that support wharf operations. A reinforced concrete deck for the existing Kilo wharf and wharf extension is also included in the project's scope.

The contract was competitively procured with 60 solicitation packages distributed and five proposals received. Work is expected to be completed by March 2010.

"Ultimately, the project will deliver a significant strategic enhancement to Department of Defense units assigned to Guam, while also optimizing the safety of ordnance handling at Guam's only designated munitions wharf," said Hawn.

The Naval Facilities Engineering Command manages the planning, design, construction, contingency engineering, real estate, environmental, and public works support for U.S. Navy shore facilities around the world. NAVFAC is a global organization with an annual volume of business of \$10 billion. Visit NAVFAC on the web at [www.navfac.navy.mil](http://www.navfac.navy.mil). (USN)

## Shimabukuru plants flame tree at resort

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN  
Rianne\_pangelinan@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

To commemorate Beautify CNMI's two-year anniversary, celebrity tree planter and ukulele virtuoso Jake Shimabukuro planted a flame tree sapling at the Saipan World Resort on Thursday.

Beautify CNMI! Volunteer Angelo Villagomez said that "like all things Beautify CNMI!, we had a lot of help from many different

people planting this tree."

Brad Doerr, volunteer and tree grower extraordinaire, provided the group with a tree and fertilizer. Ken Kramer brought shovels from the RC&D, the Saipan World Resort GM and staff provided water and other coordination, while an army of people took pictures.

Shimabukuro was on the island to hold a grand ukulele concert at the Saipan World Resort Thursday evening. The concert

was a charity event to help raise funds for the Hotel Association of Northern Mariana Islands and Beautify CNMI—both non-profit organizations.

Shimabukuro is recognized in Hawaii as an outstanding musician and role model. He has been named Hawaii's goodwill ambassador to Japan, and received the "Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation" for being an active voice in U.S.-Japan relations at the grassroots level.

## 2008 tax forms are now available

The Division of Revenue and Taxation said Friday that the 2008 tax forms for individual filers are now available on the Department of Finance website, <http://cnmidof.net>, and at their office in the Joeten DanDan Commercial Center. The general rule for which type of income tax return to use are as follows:

1. U.S. (US), CNMI (MP), and Guam (GU) citizens, bona fide residents to the CNMI and resident aliens meeting the green card or substantial presence test use the following forms as appropriate.

- Form 1040EZ-CM
- Form 1040A-CM
- Form 1040CM

2. Nonresident aliens use Form 1040NR-CM. You are a nonresident alien if you are not a U.S. green card holder

(granted immigration status as lawful permanent resident of the United States) or you do not meet the substantial presence test (required number of days physically present in the CNMI in 2005 through 2007). Refer to the 1040NR for more guidance or consult a tax professional.

3. File Form 1040NMI. If you are not required to file an income tax return (items 1 or 2) and have wages and other income subject to earning tax in 2007.

The Division also said that self-service filing for the 1040EZ-CM will be made available beginning Friday, April 4, 2008, from 8am to 3:30pm, and every Monday through Friday at the Taxpayer Assistance Section at the Compliance Branch Section. This self-service filing allows individuals whose fil-

ing status and type of income qualifies to use a 1040EZ-CM to enter their information into the computer system and have a physical copy of their tax return printed at a minimal cost of \$5. The fee is to recover the administrative cost of providing this service to the general public.

To utilize this service, bring with you a copy or copies (if you worked for more than one employer in 2007) of your W2-CM, any interest income statement or Form 1099-Int from a financial institution, your social security card, and a picture ID. If you are married and filing jointly a Form 140EZ-CM, both spouses must be present to file their return.

If you have any questions, call 664-1000, 1040, 1043, 1044, or 1018. (DoF)

### Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands



Department of Public Health  
Women, Infants and Children Program  
Navy Hill Bldg N-25



### PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

On August 8, 2007 the Department of Public Health officially opened the Women, Infants and Children Program, better known as "WIC."

The WIC Program is 100% federally funded, and provides nutritious foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals for pregnant and new mothers, infants and children below the age of five (5).

The WIC Program's goals are to reduce nutrition related health problems, promote breastfeeding, prevent anemia, and help lower medical costs for low-income families in the CNMI.

WIC foods include iron-fortified infant formula and infant cereal, iron-fortified adult cereal, vitamin C-rich fruit or vegetable juice, eggs, milk, cheese, peanut butter, dried beans/peas, tuna fish and carrots. Special therapeutic infant formulas and medical foods may be provided when prescribed by a physician for a specified medical condition.

The Program would like to thank the community for its patience during the initial phase of operation, and would like to assure the residents of Rota and Tinian that plans are underway to bring services to these respective islands. More information will be provided when the proposed opening dates are confirmed.

Eligible participants must meet income guidelines, CNMI residency requirements, and be determined to be "nutritionally at risk" by a health professional.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call 236-8750/58 or visit the WIC Clinic in the CHC Dialysis Center, north entrance.



## Sunday Brunch

Visit us every Sunday  
and enjoy the island's best variety of fresh  
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numerous Live Action stations!

Includes Free champagne,  
Juices and draft beer with your brunch!

All for only \$25 for adults, \$12.50 for kids 5-11  
Starting from 11 am - 2 pm

Plus FREE Complimentary Pool pass!

Live the Fiesta Way!

- Sushi, Sashimi and Specialty Salad Bar
- Authentic Chinese Dishes
- Peking Duck Station
- Extensive Seafood Buffet Featuring Crabs Legs, Oysters and more

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- Carving Stations for Roast Beef and Lechon
- Italian Pasta Station
- Okonomiyaki Station (Japanese Pizza)
- California Mexican Station
- Dessert Buffet with Crepe Station

Call 233-6414 For Reservation and Inquiries



# Opinion

Hafa Adai!

## Saipan Tribune

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AP The Associated Press

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## EDITORIAL

### Home truths

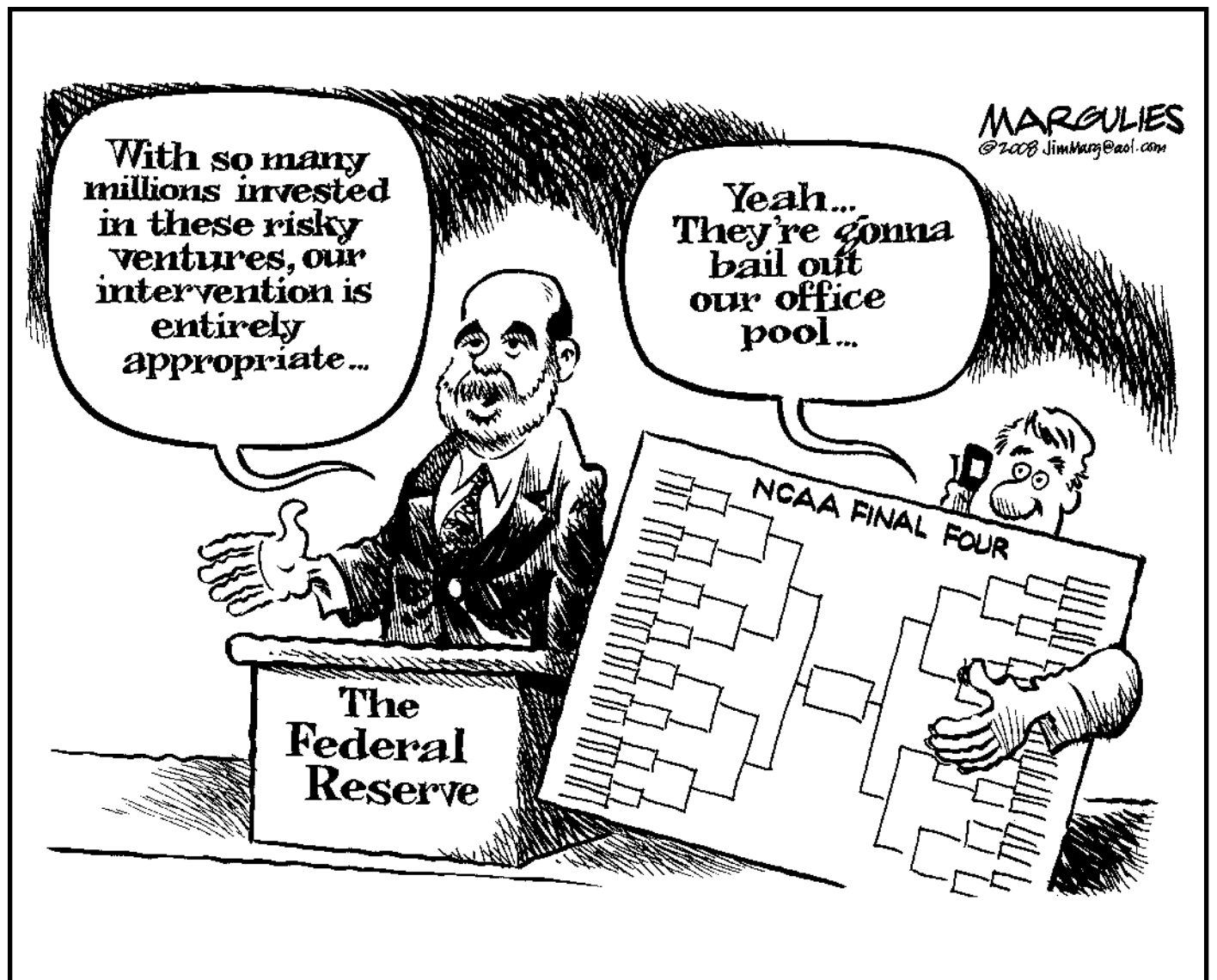
All three presidential candidates weighed in on the housing crisis this week; much has been made of the contrast between Republican John McCain's laissez-faire approach and the Democrats' calls for government action. We were struck by what they agreed on. Democratic Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama blamed lenders for foisting unpayable subprime loans on consumers, then packaging them as securities for uncomprehending investors. McCain's tone was less accusatory, but his substance was the same. In opposing a bailout for "those who act irresponsibly," McCain was not saying anything that Clinton and Obama would not; his call for limiting relief to homeowners—as opposed to speculators—is already incorporated in Democratic legislation backed by Clinton and Obama. In one form or another, all three candidates favor government-facilitated loan modifications for subprime borrowers—as does the Bush administration.

The biggest disagreement is that, unlike the two Democratic candidates, McCain refused to endorse proposals by Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., and Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., for government-backed refinancing of troubled loans. Its sponsors say their approach would not insulate lenders or borrowers from all financial loss but would halt the foreclosure crisis through one comprehensive, taxpayer-funded intervention. But the Democratic plan is still a partial bailout, with all the "moral hazard" that implies, and its cost could balloon if housing prices keep sinking. McCain noted that some subprime borrowers bought homes they couldn't afford in hopes of making a killing, while the vast majority of America's 80 million homeowners are keeping up their payments. This glossed over evidence that many borrowers, especially members of minorities, were steered into unnecessary subprime loans by profit-hungry lenders. But it was also a useful reminder that individual accountability has to be part of any solution.

For now, the best approach remains loan modification, aided by government but worked out between borrowers and lenders. One useful idea, already proposed in Congress and backed by Clinton on Tuesday, would be legislation clarifying that holders of mortgage-backed securities cannot sue lenders for participating in government-supported workouts. Clinton's own signature proposal—a 90-day moratorium on foreclosures, coupled with a five-year freeze on the introductory rates for subprime adjustable-rate mortgages—shows how hard it is to come up with policies that are both original and effective. The 90-day moratorium is a longer version of a 30-day moratorium offered by the Bush administration. Her rate-freeze plan has been criticized (by Obama) for threatening to "drive rates through the roof for those trying to buy or refinance." Obama would be right if Clinton intended a mandatory freeze, but her fine print explains that she intends a voluntary plan, worked out with the mortgage industry. And that amounts to a broader version of what the Bush administration is already doing.

Perhaps the time has come for the government to speed loan modifications through financial incentives for loan servicers, as investment banker Steven Rattner has proposed in *The Washington Post*. It's an interesting idea, even it wasn't in any of the candidates' speeches this week.

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## Behind the 'modern' China

China can go for great stretches these days looking like the model of a postmodern, 21st-century power. Visitors to Shanghai see soaring skyscrapers and a booming economy. Conference-goers at Davos and other international confabs see sophisticated Chinese diplomats talking about "win-win" instead of "zero-sum." Western leaders meet their Chinese counterparts and see earnest technocrats trying to avoid the many pitfalls on the path to economic modernization.

But occasionally the mask slips, and the other side of China is revealed. For China is also a 19th-century power, filled with nationalist pride, ambitions and resentments; consumed with questions of territorial sovereignty; hanging on repressively to old conquered lands in its interior; and threatening war against a small island country off its coast.

It is also an authoritarian dictatorship, albeit of a modern variety. The nature of its rule isn't visible on the streets of Shanghai, where people enjoy a degree of personal freedom as long as they keep their noses out of politics. It is only when someone challenges its authority that the brute power on which the regime ultimately rests shows itself. In 1989, it was students in Tiananmen Square. A few years ago it was the Falun Gong. Today it is Tibetan protesters. Tomorrow it may be protesters in Hong Kong. Someday it may be dissidents on a "reunified" island of Taiwan.

This is the aspect of China that does not seem to change, despite our liberal progressive conviction that it must. In the 1990s, China watchers insisted it was only a matter of time before China opened. It was precisely this current generation of technocrats, not schooled in Soviet-style communism, who were supposed to begin reforming the system. Even if they didn't want to reform, the requirement of a liberalizing economy would leave them no choice: The growing Chinese middle class would demand greater political power, or the demands of a globalized economy in the age of the Internet would force China to change in order to compete.

Today this all looks like so much wishful thinking—self-interested wishful thinking, to be sure, since, according to the theory, China would get democratic while Western business executives got rich. Now it looks as if the richer a country gets, whether China or Russia, the easier it may be for autocrats to hold on to power. More money keeps the bourgeoisie content and lets the government round up the few discontented who reveal their feelings on the Internet. More money pays for armed forces and internal security forces that can be pointed inward at Tibet and outward at Taiwan. And the lure of more money keeps a commerce-minded world from protesting too loudly when things get rough.

The question for observers of Chinese foreign policy is whether

By ROBERT KAGAN

Special to *The Washington Post*

Kagan, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, writes a monthly column for *The Washington Post*. His latest book, *The Return of History and the End of Dreams*, will be published next month.



the regime's behavior at home has any relevance to the way it conducts itself in the world. Recall that in the 1990s we assumed there was a strong correlation: A more liberal China at home would be a more liberal China abroad, and this would gradually ease tensions and facilitate China's peaceful rise. That was the theory behind the strategy of engagement. Many still argue that the goal of American foreign policy should be, in scholar G. John Ikenberry's words, to "integrate" China into the "liberal international order."

But can a determinedly autocratic government really join a liberal international order? Can a nation with a 19th-century soul enter a 21st-century system? Some China watchers imagine the nations of East Asia gradually becoming a kind of European Union-style international entity, with China, presumably, in the role of Germany. But does the German government treat dissent the way China does, and could the European Union exist if it did?

China, after all, is not the only country dealing with restless, independence-minded peoples. In Europe, all kinds of subnational movements aspire to greater autonomy or even independence from their national governments, and with less justification than Tibet or Taiwan: the Catalans in Spain, for instance, or the Flemish in Belgium, or even the Scots in the United Kingdom. Yet no war threatens in Barcelona, no troops are sent to Antwerp and no one clears the international press out of Edinburgh. But that is the difference between a 21st-century postmodern mentality and a nation still fighting battles for empire and prestige left over from a distant past.

These days, China watchers talk about it becoming a "responsible stakeholder" in the international system. But perhaps we should not expect too much. The interests of the world's autocracies are not the same as those of the democracies. We want to make the world safe for democracy. They want to make the world safe, if not for all autocracies at least for their own. People talk about how pragmatic Chinese rulers are, but like all autocrats what they are most pragmatic about is keeping themselves in power. We may want to keep that in mind as we try to bring them into our liberal international order.



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# Validity of Article 18 (5)(c) of the CNMI Constitution

**Editor's Note:** The following is the second part of the opinion issued by the author in response to a request by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial. The first part of this article was published in yesterday's edition, March 29, 2008. Visit the Archives section of www.saipantribune.com to access it.

## Last of two parts

### A. Validity of Limitations on the Right to Vote on Racial Grounds

The Fifteenth Amendment prohibits the States from denying the right of United States citizens to vote "on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." The definition of Northern Marianas Descent in Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution is not based on racial criteria; it defines this status in light of objective criteria—birth or domicile in the Northern Mariana Islands by 1950 and Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands citizenship at any time before 1986. In upholding Article 12 against constitutional challenge, however, the Ninth Circuit did characterize the restrictions as "race-based" and some CNMI decisions have done the same.<sup>9</sup> If the voting restrictions of Article 18 (5)(c) are challenged, a court applying the heightened scrutiny standard is likely to consider the racial implications of the definition of Northern Marianas Descent. Two important Supreme Court rulings might be relied upon to invalidate these restrictions as constituting race-based restrictions on voting in violation of the Fifteenth Amendment.

In *Guinn v. United States*, 238 U.S. 347 (1915), the Supreme Court considered an Oklahoma law that included a grandfather clause. The law required a literacy test to qualify to vote, but citizens were excused from that requirement if they were "lineal descendant[s]" of persons who were "on January 1, 1866, or at any time prior thereto, entitled to vote under any form of government, or who at that time resided in some foreign nation." In short, those persons whose ancestors were entitled to vote under Oklahoma's previous

process, the exercise of the voting franchise. A resolve so absolute required language as simple in command as it was comprehensive in reach. Fundamental in purpose and effect and self-executing in operation, the Amendment prohibits all provisions denying or abridging the voting franchise of any citizen or class of citizen on the basis of race." 528 U.S. at 512.

Differences between the laws invalidated in these two Supreme Court decisions and Article 18 (5)(c) do exist that should be emphasized in an effort to demonstrate the "non-racial" character of Article 12. It is certainly true that the definition of Northern Marianas Descent excluded (and continues to exclude) persons who are predominantly Carolinian and Chamorro in lineage, but whose ancestors failed to meet the objective criteria of the definition. On the other hand, there were persons who did qualify under the definition of Northern Marianas Descent even though they had no Chamorro or Carolinian ancestors, because their ancestors did meet the objective criteria of the definition. Even recognizing these exceptions, however, a reviewing court might elect to look at the overriding purpose and impact of the definition over the years and consider it sufficiently "racial" in nature to warrant its invalidation under the Fifteenth Amendment.

### B. Differential Treatment of Citizens under the Privileges and Immunities Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment

The Fourteenth Amendment provides that "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States..." The U.S. Supreme Court has interpreted this constitutional provision as invalidating a wide range of State efforts to treat differently based on their length of residence in the State.

In *Saenz v. Roe*, 526 U.S. 489 (1999), the Supreme Court ruled that a California law giving a preference to long-time residents of the State with respect to welfare benefits violated the Privileges and

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Special to the *Saipan Tribune*



Howard P. Willens is special legal counsel to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial.

to establish degrees of citizenship by denying the right to vote on Article 12 issues to those United States citizens who are not of Northern Marianas Descent. A critical examination of the definition of Northern Marianas Descent set forth in Article 12 might well persuade a court that the definition generally (and intentionally) favors those citizens whose families have the deepest roots in the community and disfavors those citizens whose families came to the CNMI sine 1960. Although a reviewing court might well agree with the Ninth Circuit that these distinctions can be justified with respect to land ownership under Article 12, it is likely to be more skeptical about extending them to the right to vote.

### Conclusion

The CNMI Government lawyers who have considered this question have concluded that Article 18 (5)(c) of the CNMI Constitution would be held to violate the United States Constitution if challenged in court. The Supreme Court's rulings on limitations on voting based on the Equal Protection Clause discussed in this memorandum are unambiguous and decisive with respect to the restrictions contained in Article 18 (5)(c). It is probable that a reviewing court would go no further than to rest its decision on that line of authorities. If the court were to address the other contentions discussed in this memorandum and likely to be raised in any lawsuit, we believe that there is a substantial risk that the court would also conclude that

“The Amendment grants protection to all persons, not just members of a particular race. The design of the Amendment is to reaffirm the equality of the races at the most basic level of the democratic process, the exercise of the voting franchise. ... Fundamental in purpose and effect and self-executing in operation, the Amendment prohibits all provisions denying or abridging the voting franchise of any citizen or class of citizen on the basis of race.”

voting laws were exempted from the eligibility test. The Supreme Court unanimously invalidated this grandfather clause. The Court recognized that the challenged law "contains no express words of an exclusion from the standard which it establishes of any person on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude, prohibited by the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment, but the standard itself inherently brings that result into existence since it is based purely upon a period of time before the enactment of the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment, and makes that period the controlling and dominant test of the right of suffrage." 238 U.S. at 364-65.

More recently, the Court in *Rice v. Cayetano*, 528 U.S. 495 (2000), invalidated provisions in the Hawaii Constitution limiting the right to vote in a statewide election for trustees responsible for administering a state agency known as the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. The Office implemented programs designed for the benefit of "Hawaiians" (descendants of people inhabiting the islands in 1778) and "Native Hawaiian" (descendants of not less than one-half part of the races inhabiting the islands before 1778). The right to vote for trustees was limited to Hawaiians, the larger class of persons, which naturally included the smaller class of Native Hawaiians. The Supreme Court held that the ancestry restrictions were a proxy for race and amounted to a "clear" violation of the Fifteenth Amendment.

Hawaii's argument that this was a "special purpose election" was rejected by the Court. Even if the voting scheme was permissible under the Fourteenth Amendment, the Court held that it would still need to comply with the Fifteenth Amendment. The Court specifically concluded that the voting limitation was not saved from unconstitutionality on the theory that the restriction merely ensures an alignment of interests between fiduciaries and beneficiaries of a trust. Reemphasizing the breadth and importance of the Fifteenth Amendment, the Supreme Court declared:

"The Amendment grants protection to all persons, not just members of a particular race. The design of the Amendment is to reaffirm the equality of the races at the most basic level of the democratic

Immunities Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The California law limited the amount of benefits paid under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program to newly arrived citizens in the State, who would receive only the amount they would have received in the State in which they previously lived. The Court held that the Privileges and Immunities Clause guaranteed newly arrived citizens the same rights as long-time citizens of the State. The Court emphasized that because "the right to travel embraces the citizen's right to be treated equally in her new State of residence, the discriminatory classification is itself a penalty." 526 U.S. at 505.

An Alaska statute distinguishing among citizens based on length of residence was similarly rejected by the Supreme Court in *Zobel v. Williams*, 457 U.S. 55 (1982). The Alaska law based annual payments from its mineral earnings to its citizens on each year of residence in the State sine 1959, the first year of Alaska's statehood. Alaska residents of the State since 1978 sued, claiming that Alaska's dividend plan violated their right to equal protection and their constitutional right to migrate to Alaska, to establish residence there, and their right to enjoy the full rights of Alaskan citizenship on the same terms as all other citizens. The Supreme Court agreed, commenting that "the Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment expressly equates citizenship only with simple residence. That Clause does not provide form and does not allow for, degrees of citizenship based on length of residence. And the Equal Protection Clause would not tolerate such distinctions." 457 U.S. at 69.

Although not technically based on length of residence, distinguishing among U.S. citizens in the Commonwealth based on the definition of Northern Marianas Descent in Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution may be vulnerable under the Fourteenth Amendment as interpreted in these and similar cases.<sup>10</sup> Both California and Alaska were seeking to implement laws allocating benefits or dividend payments favoring long-term residents over more recent arrivals. The Commonwealth, on the other hand, by Section 18 (5)(c) seeks

the restrictions violate the Fifteenth Amendment or the Privileges and Immunities Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

<sup>9</sup> *Diamond Hotel Co., Ltd. V. Matsunaga*, Appeal No. 93-203 (N.M.I. Sup. Ct. January 15, 1995) (refers to Article 12's prohibition on sale and ownership of land as "ethnic-based").

<sup>10</sup> See also *Hooper v. Bernalillo County Assessor*, 472 U.S. 612 (1985) (invalidating New Mexico law awarding preferential tax benefits to veterans who were State residents before May 8, 1976); *Vlandis v. Kline*, 412 U.S. 441 (1973) (invalidating New York law affording preferential tuition rates for State universities to older State citizens); *Attorney General of New York v. Soto-Lopez*, 476 U.S. 898 (1986) (invalidating New York law creating civil service preferences for resident veterans who had been New York residents at the time they entered military service).






*The Office of the Attorney General agrees with the conclusions in this memorandum. We wish to acknowledge the contribution to our legal analysis of Professor Ronald D. Rotunda, who was asked by the Attorney General to examine this issue on a pro bono basis in 2006. Professor Rotunda is one of the most distinguished constitutional law scholars in the United States. He presently is University Professor and Professor of Law at George Mason University in Virginia, after teaching for many years at the University of Illinois. He is a magna cum laude graduate of Harvard College and a magna cum laude graduate of Harvard Law School, where he served as a member of the Harvard Law Review. He has coauthored the most widely used book on legal ethnics and is the author of a leading course book on constitutional law, Modern Constitutional Law (West Publishing Co., 8<sup>th</sup> ed. 2007). He has served in a variety of important advisory positions in the United States and foreign countries, has authored several other books, and has written more than 200 articles in various law reviews, journals, newspapers, and books in this country and in Europe.*



Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

# The Weather

## 5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼75°	▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼75°	▲85° ▼75°	▲85° ▼76°

### Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Sunny	▲88 ▼75
Palau	Cloudy	▲87 ▼77
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	▲86 ▼77
Chuuk	Mostly Cloudy	▲89 ▼79
Pohnpei	Cloudy	▲85 ▼75
Kosrae	Partly Sunny	▲88 ▼77
Majuro	Cloudy	▲84 ▼75

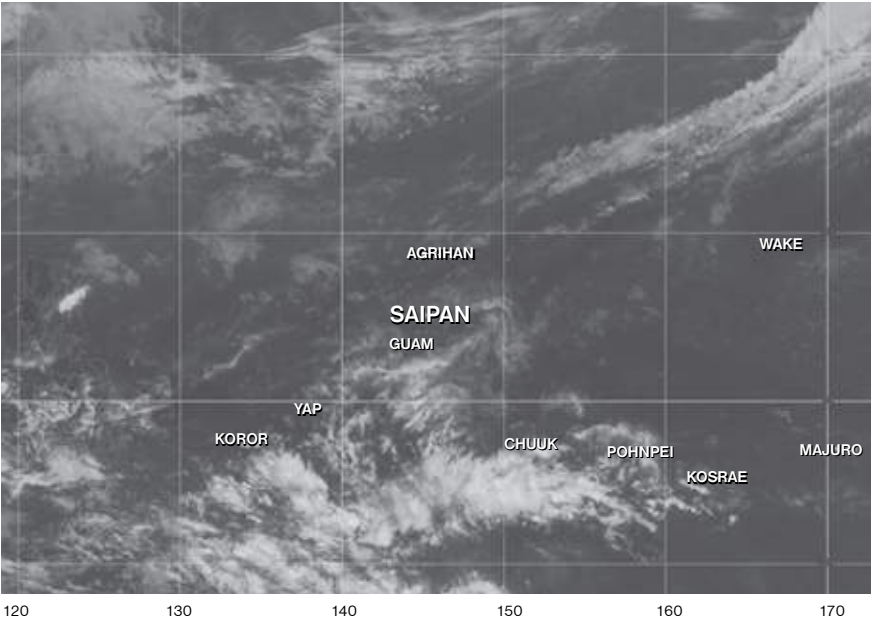
### Around The Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲70 ▼64
Beijing	Cloudy	▲50 ▼41
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	▲81 ▼70
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲84 ▼71
London	Cloudy	▲54 ▼39
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲71 ▼50
Manila	T'Showers	▲90 ▼75
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲63 ▼47
Miami	Mostly Cloudy	▲83 ▼69
New York	Partly Sunny	▲49 ▼37
Osaka	Rain	▲58 ▼39
Paris	Partly Sunny	▲51 ▼38
Pusan	Rain	▲57 ▼41
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	▲66 ▼49
Salem	Cloudy	▲51 ▼30
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲61 ▼42
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲52 ▼36
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲52 ▼45
Washington, DC	Cloudy	▲48 ▼39

### Tides

Saipan Harbor		
3:18AM Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet
7:42AM Today	Low Tide:	1.4 Feet
11:59AM Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet
8:20PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

### Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SATURDAY, MAR. 29, 2008

Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N160E to 20N149E, then continues westward as a shear line north of the CNMI at 20N145E to 20N130E. Scattered showers are found along and up to 100 miles northwest of the cold front and within 100 miles of the shear line west of 142E. A weak surface trough runs southwestward from 25N166E to 19N153E. Scattered showers are occurring along and up to 50 miles northwest of the trough. An upper-level trough is combining with a surface trough southeast of Koror from 7N135E to EQ144E, to induce scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms within 100 miles of the surface trough. A weak near-equatorial trough runs from 3N130E to 1N132E to EQ137E. Scattered showers are found within 100 miles of the trough. Trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms south of Chuuk, between 2N and 7N from 143E to 157E.

### Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:14AM	6:29PM
Monday	6:13AM	6:29PM
Tuesday	6:13AM	6:29PM
Wednesday	6:12AM	6:30PM
Thursday	6:11AM	6:30PM

### Moonrise/Moonset

Today	12:47AM	12:06PM
Monday	1:36AM	1:01PM
Tuesday	2:22AM	1:56PM
Wednesday	3:05AM	2:51PM
Thursday	3:46AM	3:45PM

\*\*Preceding Day

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Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
  - BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**  
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
  - BUSINESS**  
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
  - SAMUT SARI**  
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
  - TRAVELOGUE**  
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.
- ANNOUNCEMENTS**
  - COMMUNITY BRIEFS**

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN**  
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  - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
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  - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

- the name of contact person, and a phone number.
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DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
<b>Saipan-Rota</b> CO 9313 8:30am 9:05am 3,4,7	<b>Rota-Saipan</b> CO 9598 11:10am 11:45am 1,2,6
<b>Saipan-Guam</b> CO9317 4:00am 4:50am Daily CO9597 8:30am 9:20am 1,2,5,6 CO9313 8:30am 10:00am 3,4,7 via Rota CO9601 12:30pm 1:20pm Daily CO9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily CO9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily CO9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily	<b>Guam-Saipan</b> CO 9316 2:30am 3:20am Daily CO9596 7:00am 7:50am Daily CO9598 10:15am 11:45am 1,2,6 via Rota CO9600 10:45am 11:35am 3,4,5,7 CO9602 2:00pm 2:50pm Daily CO9604 5:00pm 5:50pm Daily CO9606 8:00pm 8:50pm Daily
<b>Saipan-Narita</b> NW 078 8:25am 1:30pm Daily via Nagoya  NW 075 4:50pm 7:30pm Daily	<b>Narita-Saipan</b> NW 076 10:35am 3:05pm Daily NW 077 6:15pm 1:10am+1 Daily via Nagoya
<b>Saipan-Osaka</b> NW 083 4:20pm 7:10pm Daily	<b>Osaka-Saipan</b> NW 084 10:30am 3:05pm Daily
<b>Saipan-Nagoya</b> NW 078 8:40am 11:25am Daily	<b>Nagoya-Saipan</b> NW 077 9:00pm 1:25am+1 Daily
<b>Saipan-Manila</b> CO 895 4:45pm 6:35pm 6 CO 895 6:45pm 8:35pm 3	<b>Manila-Saipan</b> CO 890 9:15am 2:55pm 6 CO 890 11:45am 5:35pm 3
<b>Saipan-Seoul</b> OZ 604 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ 604 2:40am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7 OZ 606 3:30pm 7:00pm 2,4,6,7	<b>Seoul-Saipan</b> OZ 605 9:00am 2:30pm 2,4,6,7 OZ 603 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ 603 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
<b>Saipan-Busan</b> OZ 608 4:00am 7:35am 1,4,5,7	<b>Busan-Saipan</b> OZ 607 9:30pm 2:50am+1 3,4,6,7
<b>Guam-Manila</b> CO 891 6:00am 10:30am 3 via Yap and Koror  CO 893 6:30am 8:05am 6 CO 893 8:25am 10:00am 2,7 CO 893 5:50pm 9:10pm 5 via Koror CO 933 7:00pm 8:40pm Daily PR 111 6:00am 7:45am 1,2,4,6,7	<b>Manila-Guam</b> CO 894 11:20am 4:55pm 2,7 CO 894 7:45pm 1:20am+1 6 CO 892 9:45pm 6:30am+1 3 via Koror and Yap CO 892 10:10pm 5:30am+1 5 via Koror CO 934 10:55pm 4:30am+1 Daily PR 110 10:15pm 4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
<b>Guam-Hongkong</b> CO 909 6:50pm 9:35pm 1,5	<b>Hongkong-Guam</b> CO 910 10:35pm 5:15am+1 1,5
<b>Guam-Rota</b> CO 9598 10:15am 10:45am 1,2,6	<b>Rota-Guam</b> CO 9313 9:30am 10:00am 3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

## FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
<b>Guam-Rota</b>			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
<b>Rota-Saipan</b>			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
<b>Saipan-Rota</b>			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
<b>Rota-Guam</b>			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
<b>Guam-Rota</b>			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
<b>Rota-Saipan</b>			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
<b>Saipan-Rota</b>			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
<b>Rota-Guam</b>			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
<b>Saipan-Tinian</b>			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
<b>Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**</b>			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily



## NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- \*11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at [www.nmicrimestoppers.com](http://www.nmicrimestoppers.com)







# Good Housekeeping

## On the floor: Rugs that go for the bold

By JURA KONCIUS  
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

The designers of the luxury suites at the new Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in Prince George's County, Md., decided to design rooms around bold, modern rugs so arresting that guests would remember them and mention them to their friends.

They found just what they were looking for at the Connecticut studio of Emma Gardner, a rug designer whose inventive designs and vibrant colors have been featured in the pages of Elle Decor and Dwell magazines and at stylish restaurants and boutique hotels. Next month, when the 2,000-room hotel opens at the National Harbor development, Gardner's hand-woven rugs will have a starring role in three of the suites.

"Her rugs are so new and fresh and hip, they were perfect for these very bold, one-of-a-kind suites," says Foreman Rogers, one of the designers who worked on the eight "concept" suites. Gardner says her design philosophy is simple: Stay away from trends and go with your own creative impulses. "I just design what I'm passionate about," she says.

A rug can function as a backdrop for a room or step forward almost like a painting, says Gardner, 41, who has long been drawn to color and decoration. Although not formally trained as an artist while growing up in Japan, Con-



Emma Gardner has made a name for herself in contemporary rug design. Behind her is her Swirl design.

necticut and New York City, she always had a creative impulse, she says. "Even when I was drawing princesses, I was more interested in the patterns on their dresses than anything else."

She took classes in painting, drawing and textile design while pursuing a career as an editor of several online magazines for Conde Nast and iVillage.com. In 2002, she and her husband, Patrick McDarragh, who worked in international film sales and distribution, found themselves between jobs and decided to sell their apartment in Brooklyn and move to Litchfield, Conn., to pursue Emma's dream of designing rugs. They hooked up with Rugmark Foundation, a global nonprofit group, to find mills that pledge not to use child labor.

Gardner's Tibetan-style hand-knotted rugs of silk or wool are produced in Nepal; Indian mills produce the hand-tufted designs of New Zealand wool.

After launching Emma Gardner Design, the young couple and their 14-month-old daughter set off on a cross-country tour in a Subaru with a roof rack packed with sample rug designs. Six weeks later, Emma Gardner rugs had representation in to-the-trade showrooms in eight major American markets. "We had

this attitude: Things just would fall into place," Gardner says. "It was amazing."

The motifs in Gardner's work reflect her interests in Asian art, travel and patterns from nature, from rubber-tree leaves to bones. She is also known for her unique color combinations: One version of her Curio design features chocolate, red, spicy orange, gray and butter rectangles; Flowers on Water layers giant periwinkle and violet flowers on a charcoal back-

ground. She creates three to five designs a year and, in addition to rugs, she designs alpaca and wool throws made in Peru, as



Emma Gardner is a rug designer with inventive designs and vibrant colors. Chinese River incorporates butterflies, leaves, spirals and flowers. The colors were inspired by a Japanese kimono.



THE WASHINGTON POST  
Rubber Tree is a big seller for coastal homes.

well as pillows. Gardner's line is sold to the design trade through showrooms such as Arbiter at the Washington Design Center and through a handful of design shops, including Contemporaria in Georgetown. Prices range from \$50 to \$150 per square foot, \$2,700 to \$8,100 for a 6-by-9-foot rug.

We caught up with her by telephone at her office in Connecticut.

**Q. Where do you get your ideas?**

A. I often happen upon a color combination in an unusual way. I did a rug last year called Color Slick. We had gone to Europe with the kids on a scouting trip and went to Castle Howard in England. They

have peacocks roaming all over and I was struck by how incredible the colors were. I was also thinking about the look of when oil spills on the ground at a gas station, a shimmering liquid quality. Both were iridescent and very beautiful colors, and both images came together in the design for the rug.

**Q. Some say if you have no idea where to begin decorating a room, start with the rug. Do you think that is good advice?**

A. More and more people are using rugs as a foundation piece, as opposed to an accessory. There is a strong case to be made for that. Generally speaking, people fall in love with a rug — the color or the design — so that kind of passion is a good place to start. If you choose one thing you love, it can serve as the anchor for the room. Then you can be more neutral with your furniture.

**Q. What's the difference between decorating around traditional Oriental rugs vs. contemporary designs?**

A. My advice would be the same for both kinds of rugs: Go with what you love. You should work with the colors in the rugs to create the room. You can mix both kinds of rugs in a house, not ONLY Orientals or ONLY contemporary. Sometimes things look too stuffy if they are too matched or too perfect.

**Q. What's the best way to arrange furniture: on an area rug or around it?**

A. It depends how you want the room to feel. Sometimes a large rug with furniture half on and half off can unify the room. It's as if everything is floating on an island together. This approach may give the room a cozier feel. Some people are loath to cover up any of the rug: They use glass-top coffee tables and put furniture only up to the edge of the rug. They are making a statement that this is the focal point of the room.

**Q. Can you explain the importance of knot count in determining rug quality?**

A. We generally do 80 or 100 knots per square inch. You can do up to 150. The higher the knot count, the thinner the ply of the material, whether silk or wool. With a higher knot count, you can render designs more crisply. The lower the knot count, the chunkier the design turns out to be and the chunkier the feel underfoot, because you usually do a higher pile height with a lower count.

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# Time a major factor in total cost of paint job

By BELLE ELVING  
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

When it comes to how much painters charge, as with so much else in life, time is money.

A bedroom with newer dry-wall in good condition and little architectural trim work will take less time and cost less money to have professionally painted than one with aged plaster walls and yards of ornamental molding. "Older plaster walls where we spend time stripping wallpaper, repairing cracks, filling and sanding rough surfaces can take twice as long as a newer house with 10-year-old dry-wall," says Richard Winkler, owner of Richard T. Winkler Painting and Decorating in Alexandria, Va.

There are two basic approaches to arriving at the bottom line, says Winkler: a "contract bid," which stipulates a set fee for a job from start to finish; and a "time and mate-

rials bid," which allows for unforeseen problems requiring additional work. The first approach gives clients the comfort of a firm dollar amount, while the second builds in flexibility to take whatever time is needed to do the job well.

Experience determines how much workers are paid. Winkler estimates that in the Washington area, painters new to the trade may earn \$9 to \$10 an hour. More highly skilled painters may get \$12 to \$16, while those with years of experience repairing surfaces, removing layers of paint and producing a flawless finish can command \$20 to \$23 or more. The rates are typically the same for interior and exterior work. The cost of paint and other materials is extra, but contractors can buy supplies at a discount.

Here are the chief factors that determine the cost of a professional paint job:

- Size of the room.
- Amount of decorative

crown molding, baseboards and built-ins that require a different, typically semigloss, paint finish.

- Condition of the walls.
- Paint color and finish: The simpler the color scheme, the easier the job, says Dave Arnold, a remodeling consultant with Bethesda, Md.-based Case Design. More colors using different paint finishes (flat, satin, semigloss, etc.) require more preparation, precision and time. Coloring a dark wall with much lighter paint also adds time. Never anticipate needing just one coat, Winkler says.

■ Difficult access: Stairways and elements such as soaring cathedral ceilings often require extension ladders or other equipment, which adds to the time and the bottom line.

■ Moving furniture out and protecting what remains. You can cut the time the painters will need by doing the heavy lifting yourself.

## THIS IS A HAMMER

## Circuit tester a must for electrical work

By Samantha Mazzotta  
(C) 2008 KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

**Q: I would like to purchase a circuit tester for my tool kit, but I'm a little confused. I see three types at the hardware store—a small, cheap-looking tester; one that looks like a pen; and a fairly expensive type called a multitester. Which is the best type for a home toolkit?—Joseph B., Houston**

**A:** What's the best type for your home? Well, you should really have the first two on your list. The cheap-looking circuit tester—an item with two wires capped by metal probes on one end, and a light on the other end—is an essential safety item. With it, you can check to make sure no electrical current is traveling through a circuit before doing a repair.

A continuity tester—the one that looks like a pen, with a needle-like probe at one end

and a wire protruding from the other end capped by a metal alligator clip—creates a miniature electrical circuit for testing current-carrying items. A battery is installed inside the "pen" cartridge to supply power. To test a fuse, for example, the alligator clip is attached or held to one end of the fuse and the needle probe touched to the other end. A light inside the cartridge illuminates if the circuit is completed, meaning the fuse works. The continuity tester is useful for a variety of repairs to make sure parts will carry current.

The multitester (or multimeter) not only checks the continuity of a circuit, but also provides a more precise reading for different types of circuits to find out what level of voltage or amperes they carry. For most minor installations and repairs, such as fixtures and switches, the multitester would only be used to check continuity. Measuring continuity

(or resistance) of volts or amps in a circuit is a task for those much more experienced with electrical repairs. If you decide to invest in a multitester, get the best available and become very familiar with its operation.

In all three cases, be sure that power to the circuit being tested is turned off at the main panel. (The multitester can measure a live circuit, but I don't recommend that task for those inexperienced with electrical repairs.)

**HOME TIP:** Always turn off power to a circuit at the main panel before testing, and double-check that the current is off using a circuit tester.

*Send questions or home-repair tips to [homeguru2000@hotmail.com](mailto:homeguru2000@hotmail.com), or write This Is a Hammer, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.*

## KITCHEN MAGIC

## New Banana Tea Bread

Enjoy a slice for dessert or to start your day off right — it also makes a great snack. For a whole-grain variation, substitute 1/2 cup whole-wheat flour for 1/2 cup of the all-purpose flour.

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 cup (about 3 small) bananas, mashed, very ripe  
1/3 cup fruit-based fat replacement or unsweetened applesauce

2 large egg whites  
1 large egg  
1/4 cup pecans, chopped

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray 9-by-5-inch metal loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray.

2. In large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt.

3. In medium bowl, with fork, mix mashed bananas, fruit-based fat replacement, egg whites and egg.

4. Stir banana mixture into flour mixture just until moistened. Spoon batter into loaf pan,

sprinkle with chopped pecans.

5. Bake 40 to 45 minutes, until toothpick inserted in center of loaf comes out clean with just a few moist crumbs attached. Cool loaf in pan on wire rack 10 minutes. Remove loaf from pan, cool completely on wire rack.

6. Each slice: About 110 calories, 3g protein, 22g carbohydrate, 2g total fat (0g saturated), 13mg cholesterol, 140mg sodium.

**NOTE:** Fruit-based fat replacements are sold in the baking section of some supermarkets and health-food stores.

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*Saipan Tribune*, the CNMI's first daily newspaper, is looking for fresh talent to join our team.

### REPORTER

- At least two years' experience writing for a newspaper or magazine;
- Must know how to write hard news, features, and business stories;
- Must have competent grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax;
- College graduate (Journalism, Communication, Creative Writing, English majors a plus)
- Must be methodical, analytical, detail-oriented, and can work fast within strict deadlines;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, aggressive, and a team player;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Computer literate and with driver's license.

### SPORTS REPORTER

- At least two years' experience covering sports for a newspaper or magazine;
- Must have competent grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax;
- College graduate (Journalism, Communication, Creative Writing, English majors a plus)
- Must be methodical, detail-oriented, and can work fast within strict deadlines;
- Must be willing to put in flexible work hours;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, aggressive, and a team player;
- Computer literate and with driver's license;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be passionate about sports.

### ART DIRECTOR

- At least five years' experience in the publishing industry or related field;
- Must have at least two years' supervisory experience in the field;
- High proficiency in Adobe CS applications (InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop); knowledge of other applications for print and web a plus;
- Deep familiarity with Mac environment; knowledge in PC is a plus;
- College graduate (Fine Arts, Graphic Design or related course);
- Must have extensive knowledge in digital pre-press production and printing;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be creative, resourceful, and can work fast.

### GRAPHIC ARTIST

- At least three years' experience in the publishing business or related field;
- High proficiency in Adobe CS applications (InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop); knowledge of other applications for print and web a plus;
- Deep familiarity with Mac environment; knowledge in PC is a plus;
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- Must have basic knowledge in digital pre-press production and printing;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be creative, resourceful, and can work fast.

### EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

- At least high school graduate;
- Typing speed of at least 40 words per minute
- Must have extensive experience using Microsoft Office applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint);
- Must be familiar with Mac computers (knowledge in PC is a plus);
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, and a team player.

If you think you have what it takes to be part of this dynamic team, submit your most recent résumé and portfolio to the *Saipan Tribune*, located on the second floor of the CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan. Or e-mail it to [editor@saipantribune.com](mailto:editor@saipantribune.com). On-island hires preferred.

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CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER



## The Good Life

# Sisters creating their own pattern for success

By TERRI SAPIENZA  
© 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

You may not recognize the name. But that is likely to change soon.

Sisters Katharine Hable Sweeney and Susan Hable Smith own nine-year-old Hable Construction, a small New York-based textile company that designs and sells hand-printed fabrics and home accessories.

Hable's cheerful palette and organic patterns have made it a longtime favorite of designers and shop owners who say the fabrics, bedding, pillows, storage bins and other accessories are well made and timeless and work in both contemporary and traditional interiors.

The company is about to hit it huge: Pottery Barn Kids is using seven Hable fabrics for its new custom nursery collection of gliders, rockers, chairs and ottomans. The upholstered pieces were introduced in the chain's catalogue in January.

The sisters sell accessories and some upholstered furniture pieces to the public at a tiny store on Perry Street in New York's West Village, online at [www.hableconstruction.com](http://www.hableconstruction.com), and at more than 100 boutiques

and department stores across the country, including Neiman Marcus, Bergdorf Goodman and Barneys New York. Fabrics are sold only through designers.

The Texas-born siblings (Katharine is 40; Susan, 37) founded their company in 1999 and took the name from their late great-grandfather's road construction business. ("Our dad is bursting his buttons, he's so proud," Katharine says.) Many shoppers have come to know their look through the Garnet Hill catalogue, which sells Hable holiday items such as wool-felt stockings and tree skirts, and which recently introduced the company's pillows, quilts, shams and sheets.

"Our customers just love Hable," says Wendy Thayer, spokeswoman for Garnet Hill. "They have created a reputation for being amazing textile designers and having really beautiful designs."

But such stylishness will cost you. A Pottery Barn swivel glider covered in a standard brushed twill costs \$849; the same glider with a Hable fabric costs \$1,849. On the Hable Web site, a lovely canvas storage container for towels or toys is \$275. Totes start at \$110, pillows at



A glider and ottoman upholstered in Hable Construction's Basil Big Beads for Pottery Barn Kids. THE WASHINGTON POST

\$95. But price does not seem to deter a growing group of loyal customers. At the store's sample sale last spring, there was a 45-minute wait to get in the door.

We talked to Katharine and Susan by telephone from New York about their style and upcoming projects.

### How did Hable Construction start?

**Katharine:** We started out selling silk scarves, then shifted into silk hand-beaded pillows. They were beautiful, but too precious for our lifestyle. We're blue-jeans-and-cowboy-boots girls. We're very utilitarian, and at the end of the day we wanted something that was that durable and practical. Now we print on canvas and cotton linen.

### How would you describe Hable Construction's look?

**Susan:** Cheery, fresh, organ-

ic, hand-drawn patterns. People have called us the "queens of the sun porch or sunroom." Our collection isn't edgy, and it's not retro. I never want to attach those words to Hable. We are the antithesis of that.

### What attracted you to Pottery Barn?

**Katharine:** We've always loved their aesthetic, and they have a great color palette. We offer four fabrics from our collection, and we did a few prints exclusively for them. Now if someone wants a chair with our fabric, they don't necessarily have to use a designer to get it.

### How would you describe your personal style?

**Katharine:** My clothing style is classic and simple, but my home in Brooklyn is kind of wild: bright and colorful, more modern. I have three kids, so

I have a lot of modern furniture that's easy to wipe off. My house is not the house of beige.

**Susan:** I love to wear color and pattern. I take more per-

sonal risks in what I wear but tend to be more classic with my Manhattan home. That said, we're building a home in Georgia, and the door is going to be hot pink.

### Do you use Hable products in your home?

**Katharine:** All over the house: a custom Poppy fabric in lemon on my sofa, chairs in our turquoise Bead. The bedding in my twin girls' room is our Pebble quilt in white with hot-pink sheets from Garnet Hill and Hable's cupcake pillow. Our Circus bedding collection from Neiman Marcus is in our son's room.

**Susan:** Pretty much all over our apartment: the bedding, the decorative pillows. I had a pair of big, upholstered drum lamp shades made with our Shells fabric in tunis (a dark green-blue). It's my favorite fabric.

### What is your favorite Hable item?

**Susan:** The storage bushel. I have them in every room in the house, and I use them for everything: toys, laundry — they really trap all the loose ends. The room can be a disaster, and five minutes later it can be completely picked up. They make my life easier, and they're aesthetically pleasing.

**Katharine:** Our camping cot. They fold up, so they're totally moveable pieces of furniture. We've used them for extra bedding, for kids' sleepovers. You can use them for parties for casual seating outside: Just throw some pillows on them.

### What's new for the spring and fall?

**Katharine:** We've added 14 new fabrics this spring and three new patterns: Rope, Tides and Sails.

**Susan:** We have two additional patterns coming in the fall and a really big bird pattern for the following spring. We're also developing a new fabric that's 100 percent organic, which we also hope to debut in spring '09.



THE WASHINGTON POST

Texas-born siblings Susan Hable Smith, left, and Katharine Hable Sweeney, own Hable Construction, about to hit it big as their products are being sold through Pottery Barn Kids.



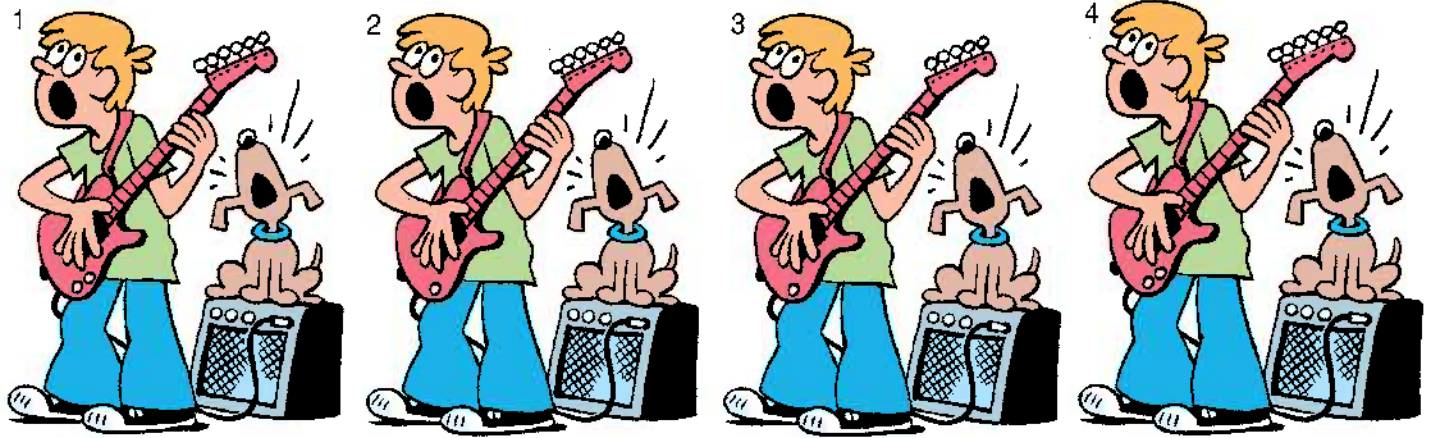
THE WASHINGTON POST

A selection of pillows shows the organic designs for which the Hable sisters are known.



# Bob Weber Jr.'s Slylock Fox and COMICS for KIDS

Which two scenes are exactly alike?

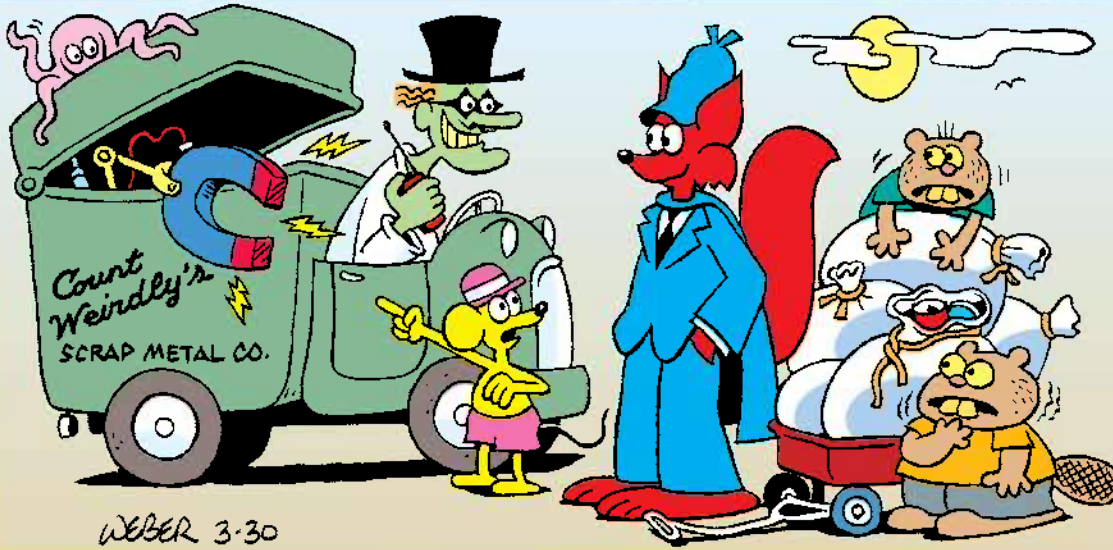


Answer -- Numbers one and four.

The Beaver brothers collected soda cans for a cash refund at the Forest Recycling Center. Max Mouse discovers that Count Weirly is planning to use a supermagnet to steal the metal cans. Slylock Fox seems unconcerned. Why?

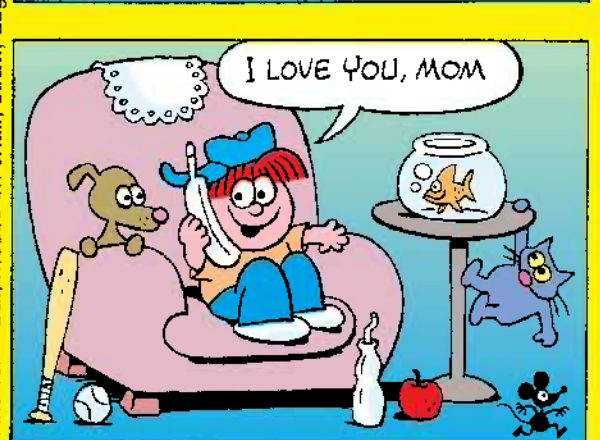
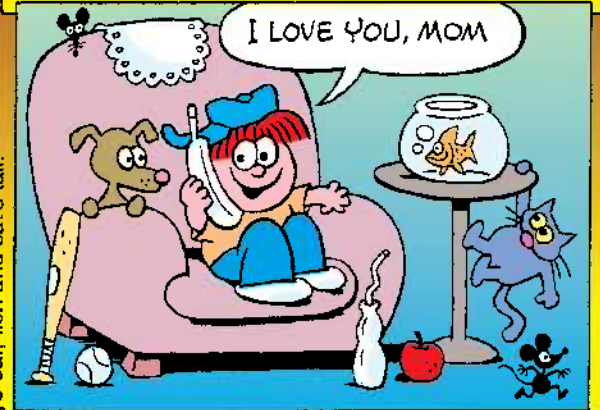
Solution -- The cans are made of aluminum, which is not attracted to magnets.

You can solve more Slylock Fox puzzles at [www.kidcartoonists.com](http://www.kidcartoonists.com)



WEBER 3-30

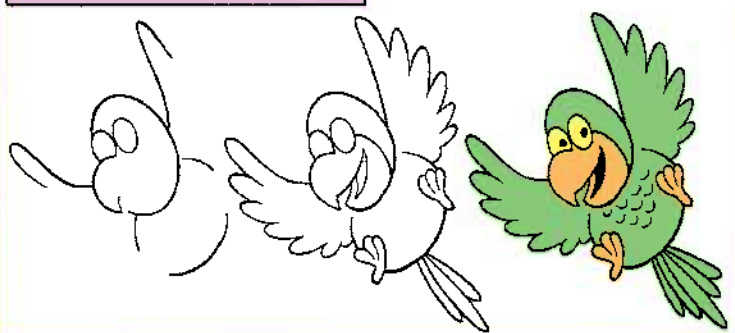
Find six differences between these panels.



Answer -- Bat, mouse on chair, straw, dog's ear, fish and cat's tail.

New! The fourth Find the six differences collection is here. Send \$4 (check/money order in U.S. funds made payable to King Features) with your name and address to Six Differences No. 4, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

## HOW TO DRAW a parrot



## Your Drawing

Today's wonderful young artist is Libby Moyer, age 11, of Leewood, KS



Submit your artwork at [www.kidcartoonists.com](http://www.kidcartoonists.com)

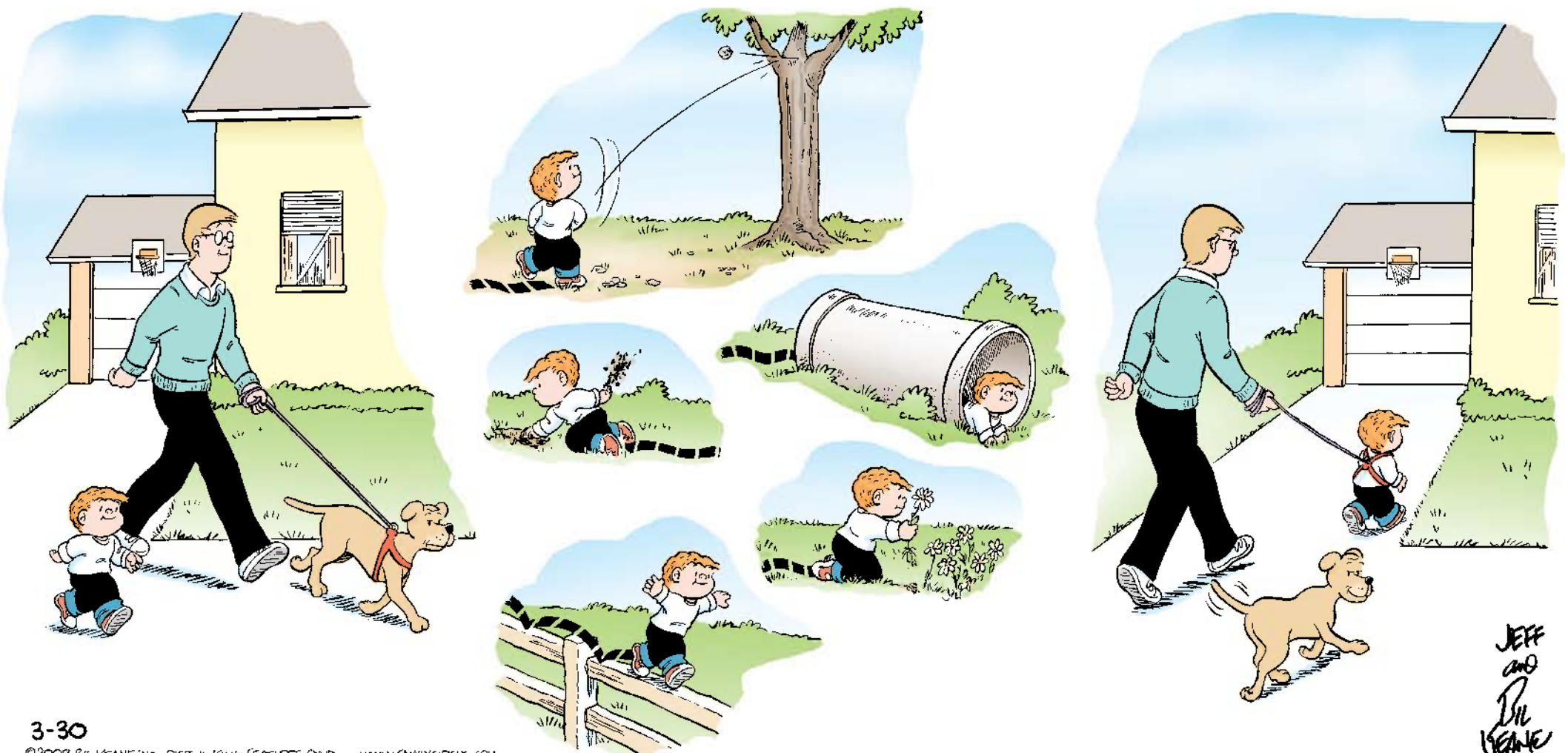
Which of the following is the heaviest naturally occurring metal on Earth?

- a) Iron
- b) Lead
- c) Gold
- d) Uranium
- e) Copper

Answer -- d

# THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bill Keane

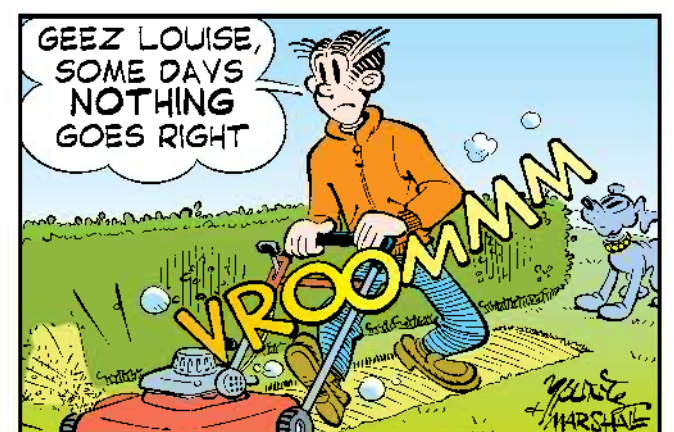
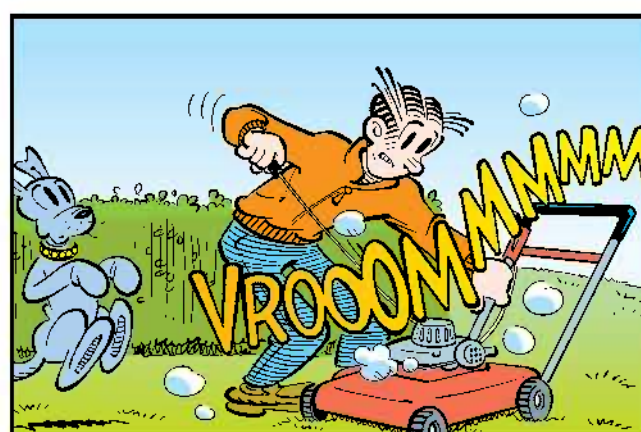
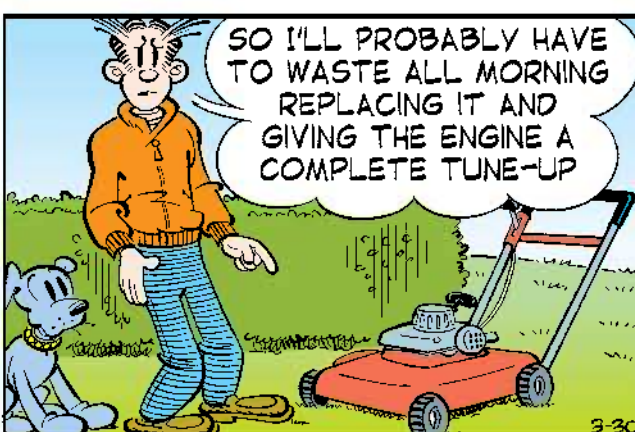
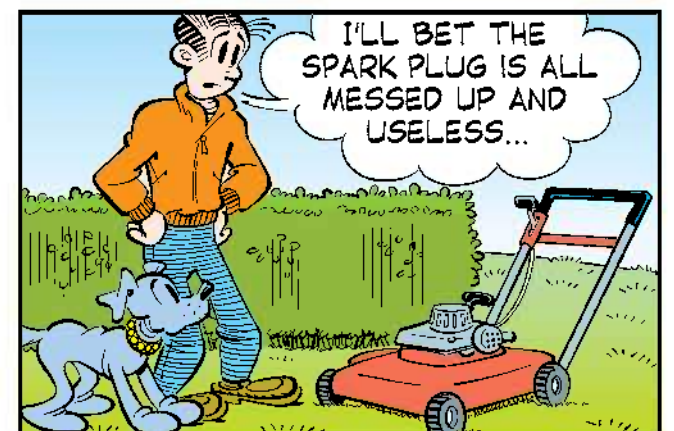
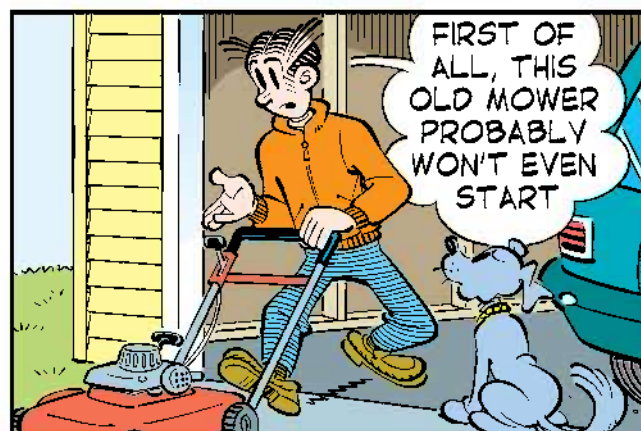
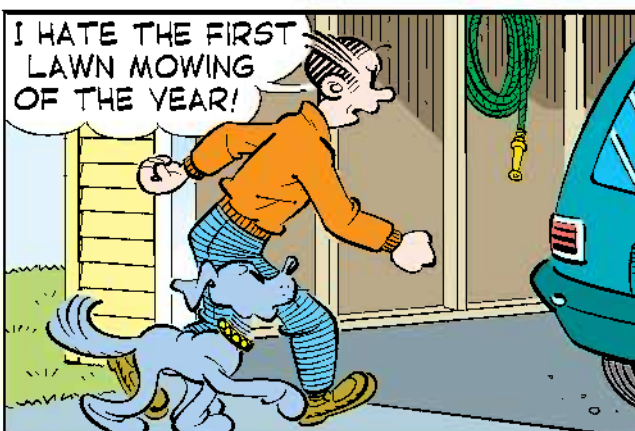
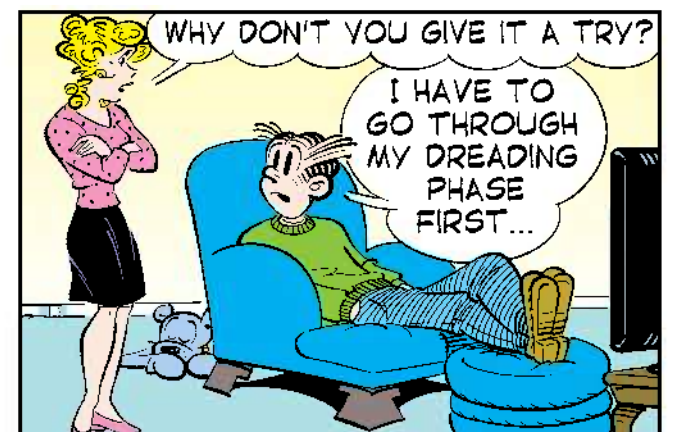
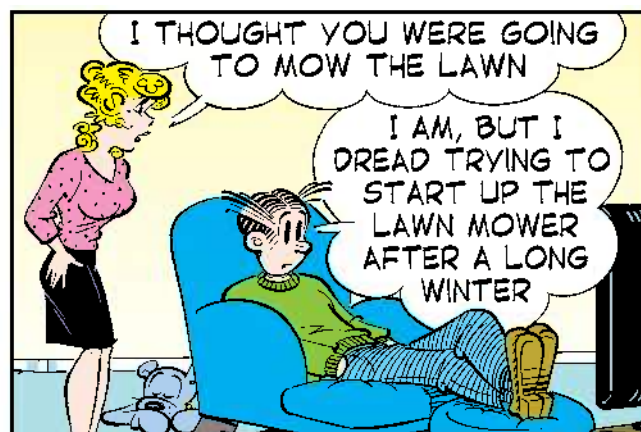
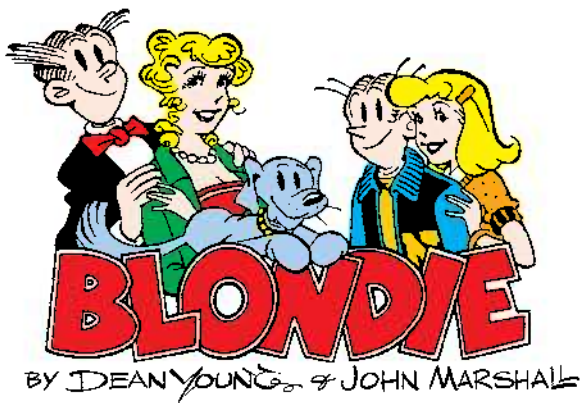
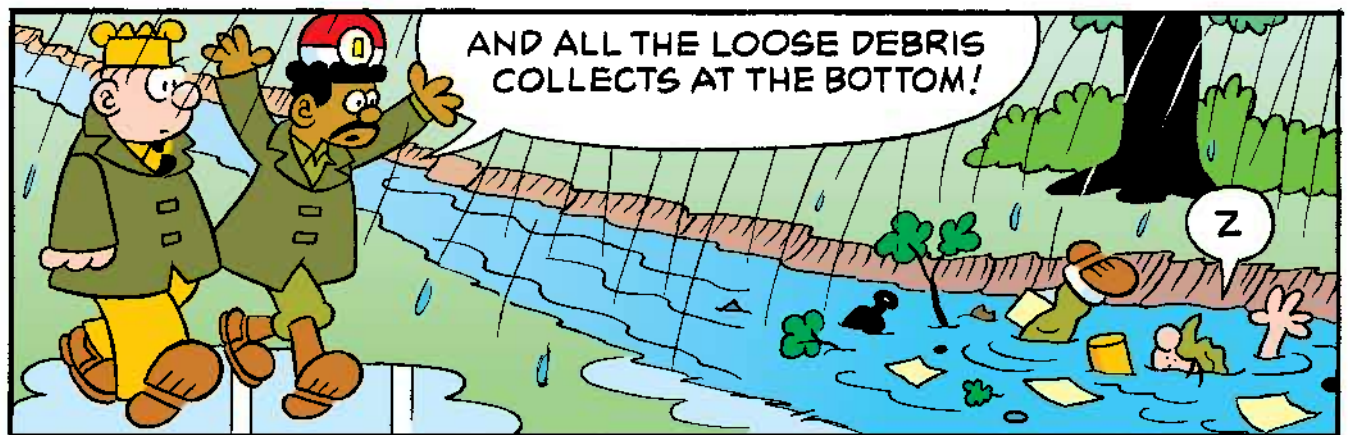
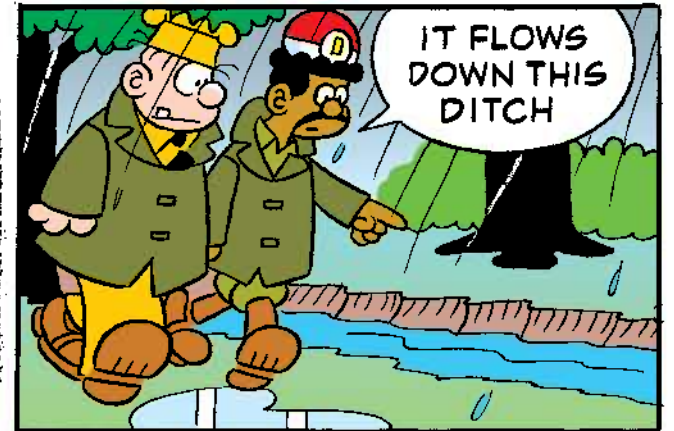
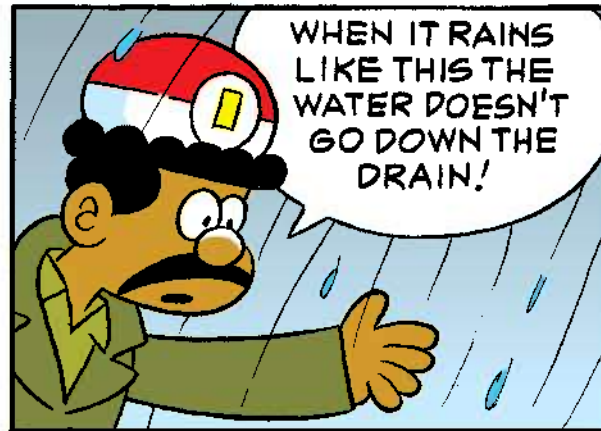
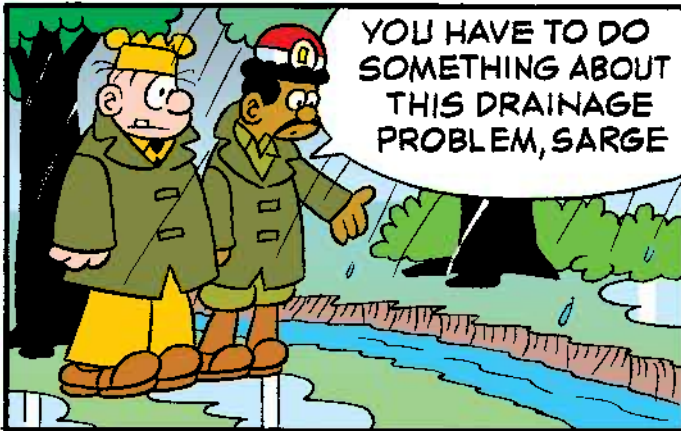
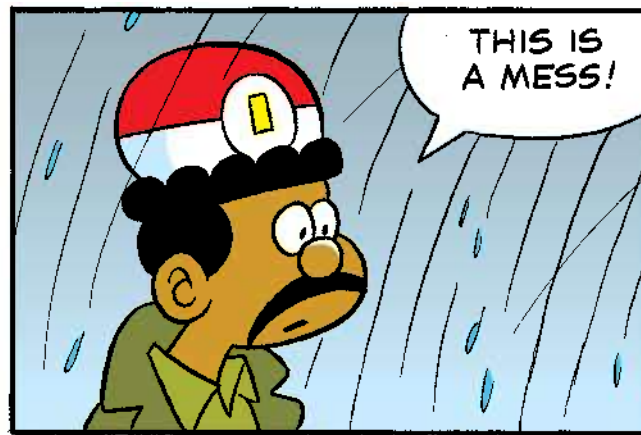
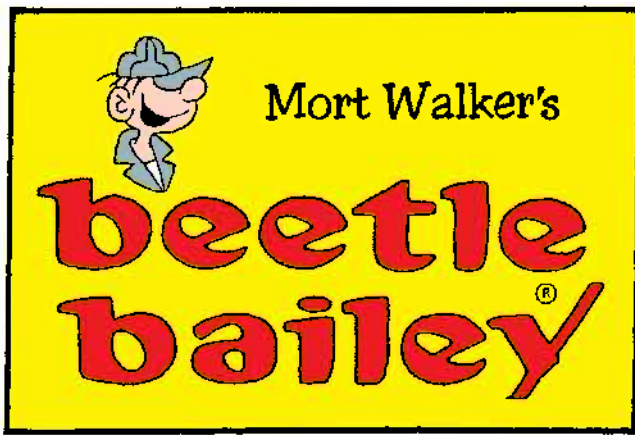


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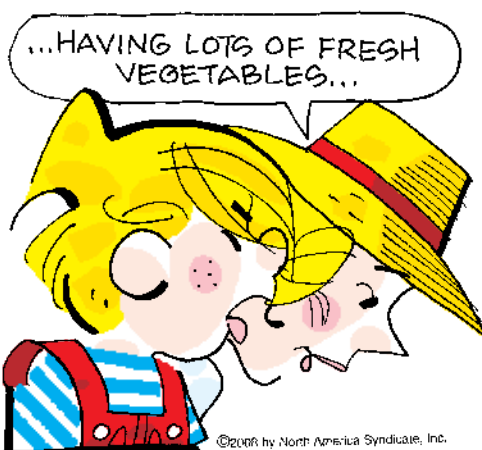
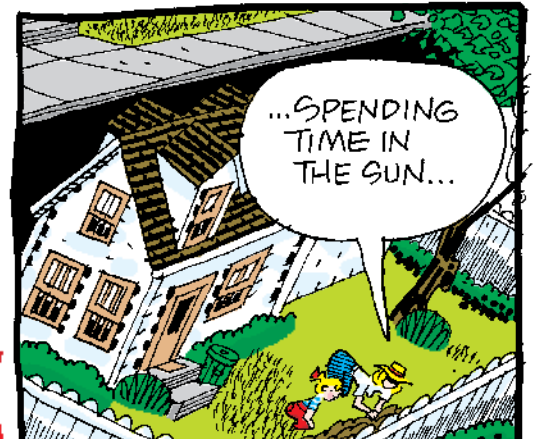
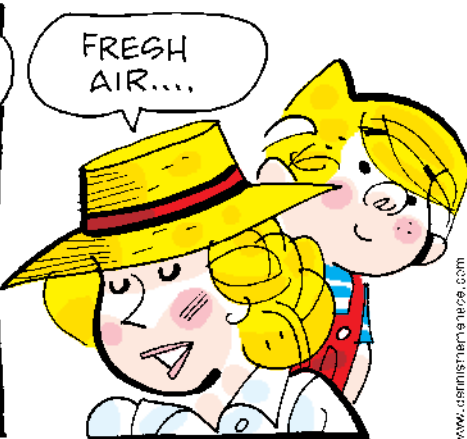
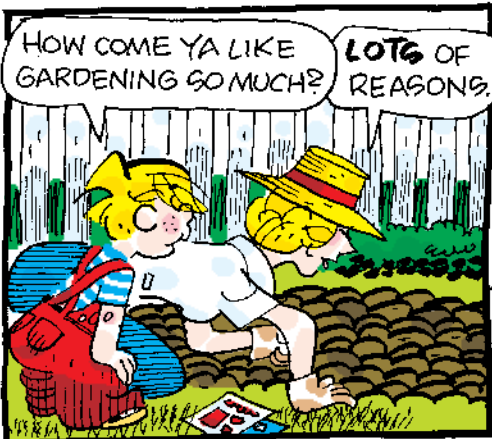
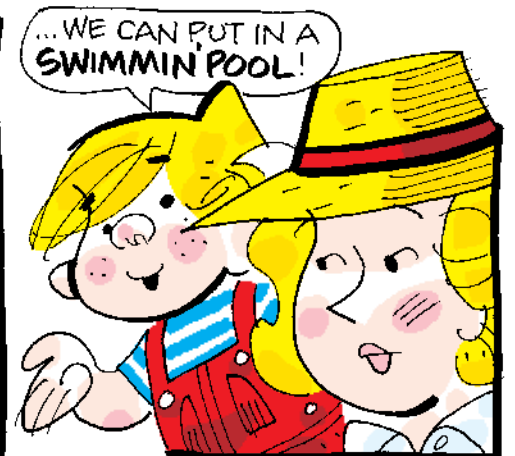
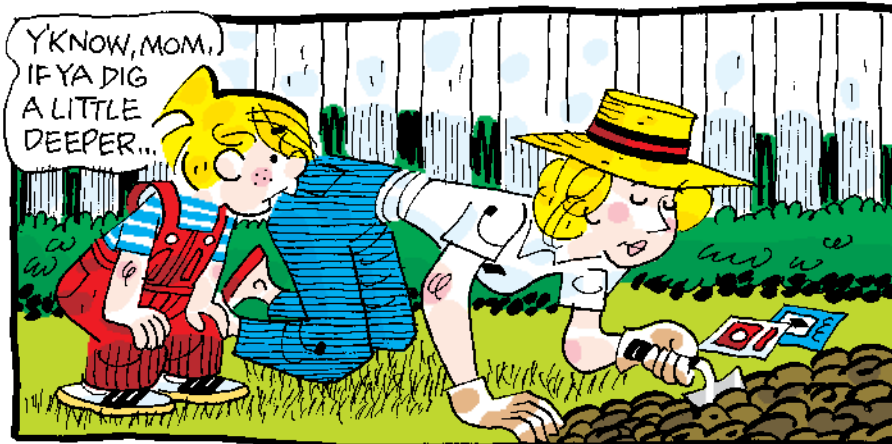
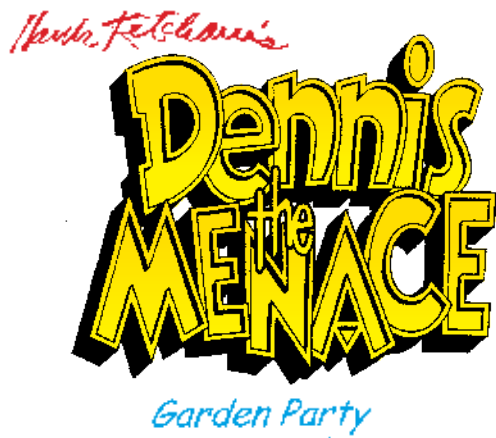
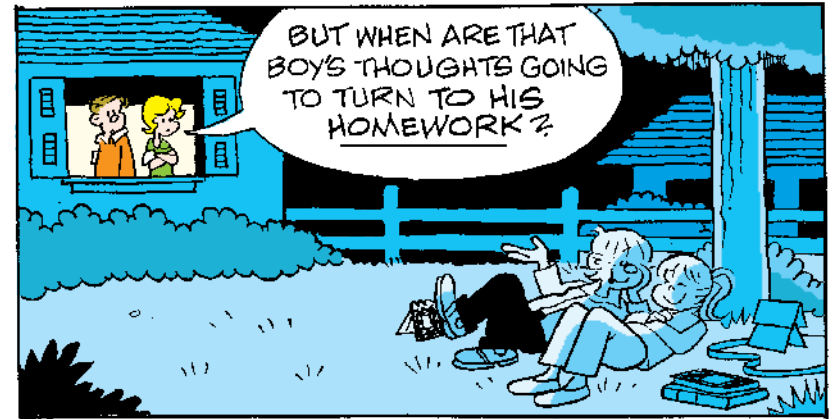
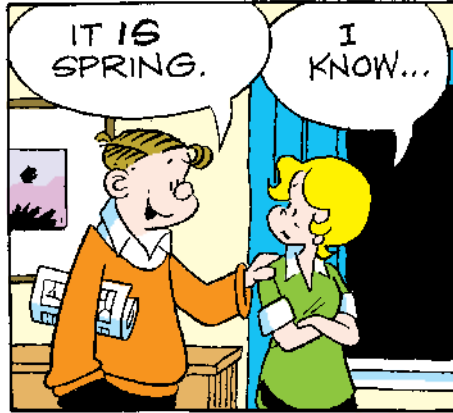
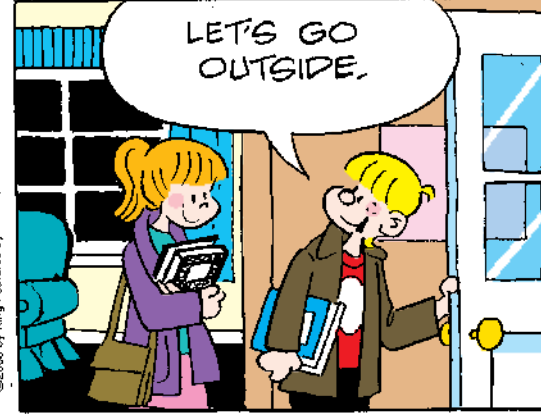
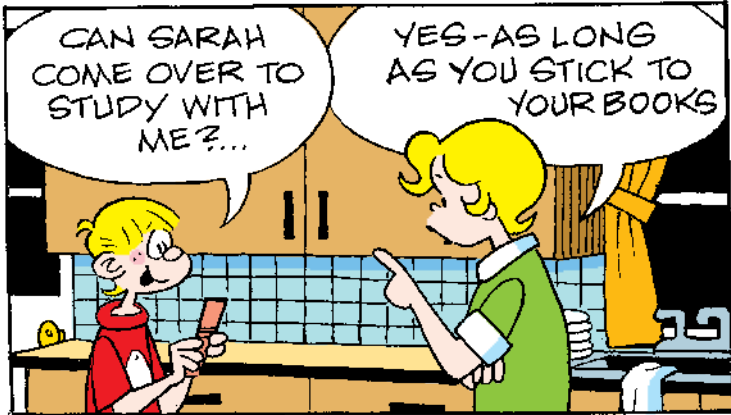
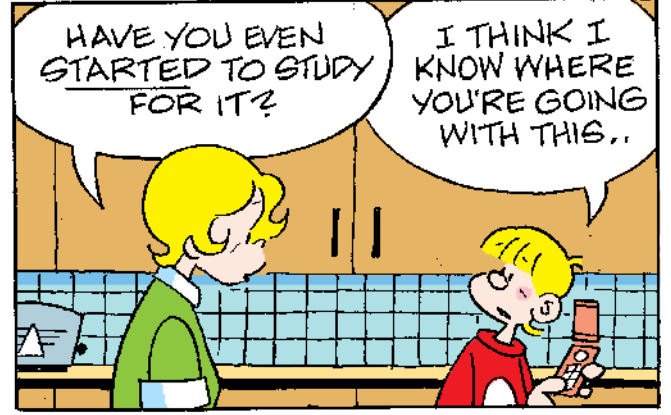
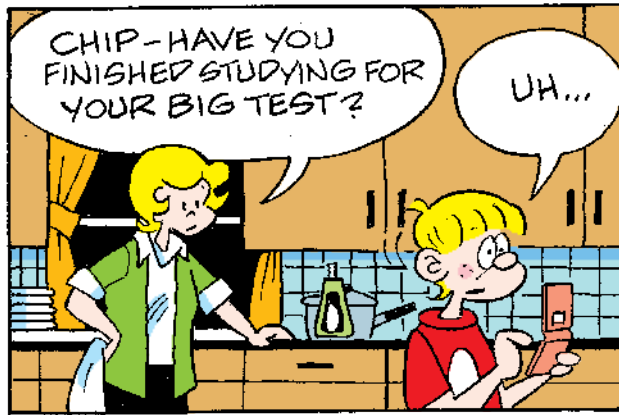
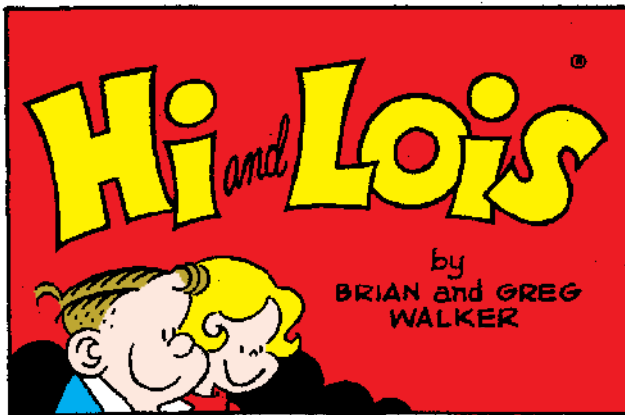
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JEFF AND BILL KEANE





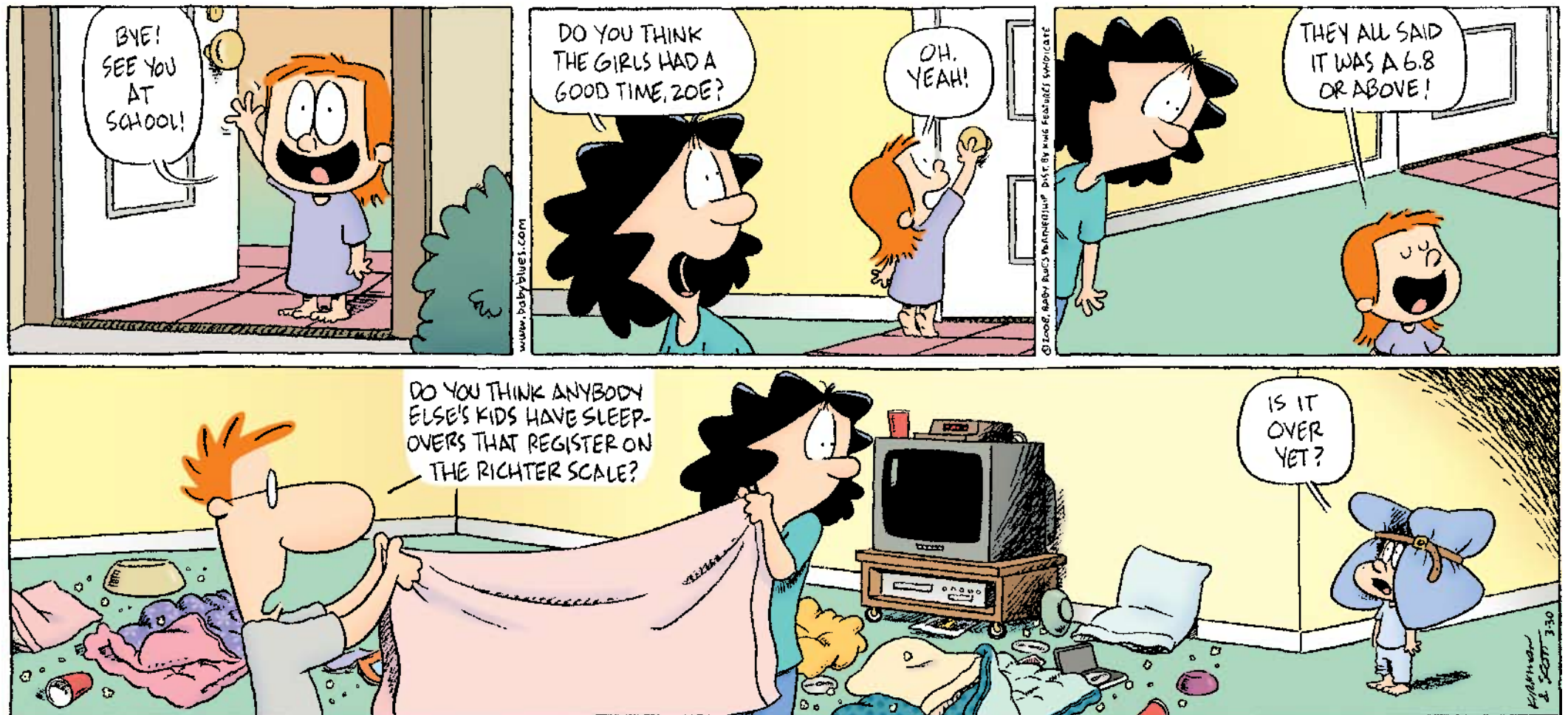






# BABY BLUES™

BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT



## Salome's Stars

**ARIES** (March 21 to April 19) Congratulations, Lamb. This is the week to finish your project and then bask in your well-earned approval. (And if you like, you can also say "bah" to all those detractors.)

**TAURUS** (April 20 to May 20) The bold Bovine could find a new opportunity too intriguing to be ignored. But don't charge into it. Go slowly so you see how things develop as you get more involved.

**GEMINI** (May 21 to June 20) You might try to soften your stand on that important issue. A little more flexibility could actually get you what you're looking for. A new friend enters the picture midweek.

**CANCER** (June 21 to July 22) Your inner voice is on the mark when it advises you to tackle that family problem now! The sooner you're able to come to terms with it, the better it will be for everyone.

**LEO** (July 23 to August 22) Someone reveals important news about a longtime associate. But before you decide how to deal with this information, make sure it's reliable, and not simply self-serving.

**VIRGO** (August 23 to September 22) Some intensive soul-searching early in the week can help you reach a decision by week's end that should please both you and the other person involved. Good luck.

**LIBRA** (September 23 to October 22) The possibility of a career change is intriguing. Learn more about what it can offer and what it cannot. Weigh everything carefully. And ask questions.

**SCORPIO** (October 23 to November 21) Work is your priority this week as you try to make up for lost time. Expect help from someone who cares about you. Things take a welcome turn by the weekend.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22 to December 21) A health problem causes some anxiety early in the week. But prompt medical attention soon eases everyone's concerns. Enjoy an arts-filled weekend.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22 to January 19) As much as you might resent it, a changing situation could require you to adjust your plans accordingly. The good news: An associate agrees to cooperate.

**AQUARIUS** (January 20 to February 18) That old problem is finally resolved, just in time for you to take on a new work-related project. This one could be the super door-opener you've been looking for.

**PISCES** (February 19 to March 20) The early part of the week presents some difficult hurdles. But once you get over them, you can start to focus on matters that are more important to you.

**BORN THIS WEEK:** You are respected for your honesty and your dedication to doing the right thing, no matter how difficult that might be.

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## King Crossword

**ACROSS**

1 Data  
6 Irving or Grant  
9 Choose  
12 Wahine's welcome  
13 Pigeon's sound  
14 Actor McBride  
15 Libyan money  
16 Hide  
18 Pollen-producing organ  
20 Kiln  
21 Jackie's second mate  
23 With it  
24 De Mille or Moorehead  
25 Unuttered "alas"  
27 Wild West transport  
29 Overlook  
31 It may be lead or grease  
35 Anorak  
37 Heavy reading?  
38 Theme  
41 Mine car contents  
43 Gripe repeatedly  
44 See 20-Across  
45 Odium  
47 Set  
49 Rendering dumbfounded  
52 Smack

**DOWN**

1 Craze  
2 Hogan's "American Gladiators" co-host  
3 Give over (to)  
4 Just one of those things?  
5 Jessica Parker or Michelle Gellar  
6 Take  
7 Werewolf's inspiration  
8 Thither  
9 Lindbergh's view  
10 Aspect  
11 Pinball infractions  
17 Appealing to the mind  
19 Skinflint  
21 "I was saying, ..."  
22 Semi, e.g.  
24 Time of your life?  
26 Optimistic  
28 Here and there?  
30 U.K. fliers  
32 Appropriate  
33 "Little Teapot"  
34 Journey segment  
36 Eucalyptus eaters  
38 Starbucks flavor  
39 Egg-shaped array  
40 Bivouac  
42 Obliterate  
45 Physicist Otto  
46 Basin accessory  
48 Green (Pref.)  
50 Greek consonants  
51 Obtain

## top ten

### Most Numerous Birds

1. Snow Goose
2. Canada Goose
3. European Starling
4. American Robin
5. Common Grackle
6. American Crow
7. American Goldfinch
8. Dark-eyed Junco
9. Red-winged Blackbird
10. Mourning Dove

Source: The Great Backyard Bird Count, North America, 2008

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### KING CROSSWORD LAST SUNDAY'S ANSWERS

TAP	PAW	PRINT
ICE	ORO	AORTA
BIN	SAMMY	CAHN
INN	TREES	
AGES	ANT	CINE
	APT	SCHOOL
SAUTE	HANDY	
ERSATZ	HIM	
AMEN	IDO	PIED
	ANITA	VEE
JAYES	CAAN	ORE
AWASH	NIT	RID
BETSY	ARE	YES

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# United States

## Man arraigned in NJ lover's slaying

**TRENTON, N.J. (AP)**—The married lover of a missing New Jersey woman was ordered held on bail Friday after prosecutors alleged he struck her on the head, stuffed her chopped-up body in a suitcase and dumped it in a pond.

Investigators believe Rosario DiGirolamo killed Amy Giordano with a blunt object in her apartment last June, then sawed her body into pieces, prosecutor Tom Meidt said in court.

"He had to get a hand saw or a hacksaw to complete the job of chopping up the body of Amy Giordano," he said.

DiGirolamo, 33, was ordered to remain in jail in lieu of \$1 million bond.

He was arrested last week after skeletal remains believed to be Giordano's were found in a pond in Staten Island, N.Y., with the help of John A. Russo Jr., an alleged accomplice who has been speaking with investigators.

Authorities believe the remains are Giordano's because pictures of her son, whom DiGirolamo fathered, were in the suitcase, Meidt said. DNA tests are pending.

Meidt said that DiGirolamo killed his 27-year-old mistress because he could no longer afford to support two households and that he told Russo beforehand of his intentions.

## Obama gets boost; Clinton urged to quit

**PITTSBURGH (AP)**—Barack Obama got a surprise boost in the last big state of the long Democratic campaign Friday with an endorsement from Pennsylvania Sen. Bob Casey Jr., while another Obama supporter sought to nudge Hillary Rodham Clinton out of the race.

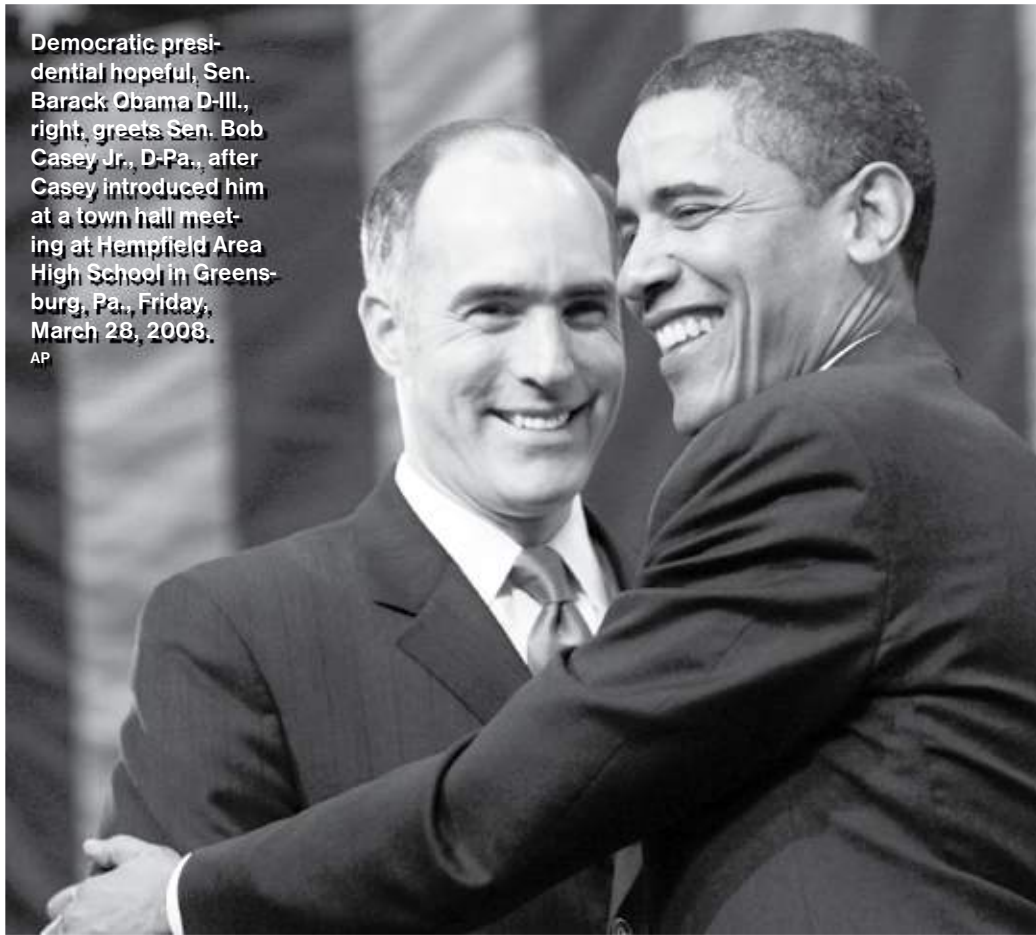
Clinton leads by double-digits in Pennsylvania polls, and Obama hopes Casey's endorsement will earn him a second look from the state's white, working class and Catholic voters—groups that have leaned toward Clinton in other Democratic contests this year.

Clinton, on the other hand, is hoping a victory in Pennsylvania will help persuade party "superdelegates" to support her and allow her to catch Obama in the race for National Convention delegates.

Sen. Patrick Leahy, a Vermont senator who endorsed Obama in January, said she was never going to win enough delegates, and he suggested she should throw in the towel in "the interests of a Democratic victory in November." A number of Democrats have expressed concern that Republican John McCain is getting a head start while Obama and Clinton fight on.

Undeterred, Clinton said the competition would only strengthen

Democratic presidential hopeful, Sen. Barack Obama D-Ill., right, greets Sen. Bob Casey Jr., D-Pa., after Casey introduced him at a town hall meeting at Hempfield Area High School in Greensburg, Pa., Friday, March 28, 2008. AP



en the party in the long run.

"This spirited, exciting contest is actually a real plus for us," she said while campaigning in Indiana, which has its primary two weeks after Pennsylvania's April 22 vote.

McCain launched his first television ad of the general elec-

tion campaign Friday, portraying himself as a courageous leader with the knowledge and experience to keep the country safe as a wartime commander in chief. "The American president Americans have been waiting for," the ad says, juxtaposing footage of the Arizona senator with clips of

him as a prisoner of war in Vietnam three decades ago.

Casey, the son of a popular late governor, had said earlier this month he would not endorse before the Pennsylvania primary out of concern for party unity. But he joined Obama at a boisterous rally kicking off

a six-day bus trip through the state, where current Gov. Ed Rendell has been campaigning hard for Clinton.

Coming so late in the campaign season, Pennsylvania will play an unexpectedly key role this year. The state's primary will allocate 158 delegates, the biggest prize left in the drawn-out nomination battle.

After the Pittsburgh rally, Casey said of Obama: "I believe in this guy like I've never believed in a candidate in my life, except my father."

Unfazed, Clinton noted her own roster of high-powered endorsements including Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter and anti-war Rep. John Murtha in addition to Rendell.

The former first lady's campaign used the criticism of her candidacy as a fundraising tool.

"Have you noticed the pattern?" Clinton wrote in an e-mail to supporters. "Every time our campaign demonstrates its strength and resilience, people start to suggest we should end our pursuit of the Democratic nomination. Those anxious to force us to the sidelines aren't doing it because they think we're going to lose the upcoming primaries. The fact is, they're reading the same polls we are, and they know we are in a position to win."

## New Central Command leader is an Army man

**MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (AP)**—One of the Army's most Iraq-savvy generals took charge Friday of arguably the most important command in the U.S. military, the one with responsibility for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In a ceremony attended by top Pentagon officials, Lt. Gen. Martin Dempsey assumed temporary command of U.S. Central Command, replacing Navy Adm. William J. Fallon, who relinquished his post after just one year in the assignment. President Bush has not yet nominated a permanent replacement.

Fallon had announced unexpectedly on March 11 that he was quitting, days after a magazine reported that he was at odds with President Bush over Iran policy. He said the report had become a distraction.

Dempsey, whose field experience in the early stages of his 34-year Army career was largely in Europe, has been deputy commander at Central Command since August 2007. He will serve as the acting commander until Bush chooses a permanent

replacement and gets that person confirmed by the Senate.

Dempsey takes charge at a particularly sensitive time, not only because of heightened concern about relations with Iran and the uncertain outlook for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also because of the approaching November elections and the prospect of



Dempsey

policy shifts by a new U.S. president.

"I am very proud to be part of this team," Dempsey said in brief remarks. "Now let's get back to work and see if we can make life a little better for our friends and a little

more difficult for our enemies." Fallon offered high praise for Dempsey, saying: "I can think of no one better qualified, more ready to do this than Marty. This command is going to be extremely well led. You've got more experience and more understanding of how things really are than anyone I've met in this area."

Defense Secretary Robert Gates noted the unusual circumstances facing Dempsey, who recently was confirmed by the Senate for promotion to four-star rank, but in a different job—as commander of U.S. Army Europe.

### ACROSS THE NATION

#### 1 inmate dead in Texas prison riot

**THREE RIVERS, Texas (AP)**—One inmate was killed and 15 others were hospitalized after a riot at a federal prison in South Texas early Friday. How the inmate died is still being investigated, said Federal Bureau of Prisons spokeswoman Deborah Denham. She did not believe that guards used any potentially lethal force to break up the fight. No staff members were injured. Seven inmates were treated at the prison for minor injuries. A pair of fights broke out in two housing units at the prison around 7 a.m., when breakfast was wrapping up and guards on the day shift were coming on duty. What sparked the fights and how many inmates were involved is still under investigation, Denham said. Denham said the incident was brought under control quickly, and the community was never in danger.

#### Baby taken from FL hospital, soon found

**SANFORD, Fla. (AP)**—A woman abducted a 1-day-old baby from a secure hospital unit Friday and apparently smuggled the child out in a tote bag, police said. A 39-year-old woman was arrested a short time later after being pulled over by police in nearby Lake Mary, said Darrel Presley, deputy chief of the Sanford Police Department, near Orlando. Officials at Central Florida Regional Hospital told police of the abduction around 1:45 p.m. after hospital alarms indicated the child had been removed from the newborn unit. The hospital was immediately locked down,

but Jennifer Latham was able to slip by security because she had the child hidden in a bag. Police in Lake Mary pulled over a vehicle at about 3 p.m. that matched a description of the vehicle witnesses described Latham driving, he said. The baby was found inside unharmed and has been returned to the hospital and reunited with the parents.

#### 2 teens arrested in Va. highway gunfire

**CROZET, Va. (AP)**—A manhunt for shooters whose potshots at passing cars shut down a mountain highway ended Friday when authorities stormed a central Virginia farm, arresting a teenager and firing at a man carrying a gun. Investigators said they now believe the shootings that slightly injured two drivers were part of a long night of random gunfire in which the 19-year-old, a former high school athlete with a record of making trouble, and a 16-year-old also shot at a credit union and a residence. Slade Allen Woodson, of Afton, was charged in the shootings at the home and the credit union early Thursday, as well as the Interstate 64 shootings, which stirred memories of the Washington-area sniper shootings six years ago that killed 10 people. Authorities also charged a 16-year-old from Crozet whose name was not released.

#### Case dropped against Haditha defendant

**CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. (AP)**—The Marine Corps dropped charges and gave full immunity Friday to a serviceman who was accused of involuntary manslaughter

in a squad's killing of 24 Iraqis in Haditha in 2005. The case against Lance Cpl. Stephen Tatum, 26, of Edmond, Okla., was dismissed as jury selection was about to begin for his court-martial. The government has been seeking Tatum's testimony against the squad leader, Staff Sgt. Frank Wuterich of Meriden, Conn. Prosecutors say Wuterich directed the assault immediately after a roadside bomb killed one Marine and wounded two others in a convoy. Wuterich and another Marine shot five men nearby before the squad leader ordered his men to clear homes with grenades and gunfire, killing unarmed civilians.

#### Snorkeling teen finds shark tooth

**PORT HURON, Mich. (AP)**—David Wentz was snorkeling off Marysville Beach in the St. Clair River last August when what he thought was an odd-looking rock caught his eye. "I didn't know what to think," the 16-year-old Port Huron resident said. His father, Craig, said he knew right away what it was due to hours of watching the Discovery Channel. "It's a shark tooth," Craig Wentz said. "It's petrified. It's rock." Michigan State University paleontologist Michael Gottfried told the Times Herald of Port Huron that the 3-inch long tooth comes from an extinct species called *Carcharodon megalodon*, or the "megatooth" shark. The megalodon, which went extinct 2 million years ago, was larger than any building in Port Huron, reaching lengths of more than 60 feet. By comparison, Great White sharks generally are about 20 feet long.



# Asia

## Philippine rebels vow to ratchet up attacks

**MANILA, Philippines (AP)**—Philippine communist rebels marked their insurgency's 40th anniversary with a vow Friday to take advantage of rising food prices to stir up public discontent and intensify attacks on government troops.

The government has repeatedly dismissed the 6,000-member New People's Army as an ideologically spent force with little popular support, and the military has said it will wipe out the insurgents by 2010.

But the rebels said in a statement they would continue "to seize the initiative and launch far more tactical offensives against the enemy than last year."

They also said they aim to take advantage of the country's rapidly worsening food situation and blamed President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's policies for the rising price of rice and other essential goods.

The 117,000-strong police force declared a nationwide alert in anticipation of rebel attacks on the anniversary Saturday, said spokesman Nicanor Bartolome. He said rebels usually launch strikes every March 29.

Farmers' groups have warned that the Philippines faces its worst rice crisis in decades due to tight worldwide supply and higher oil and fertilizer costs. The government insists there

is no shortage and is beefing up rice stocks with imports from Vietnam and Thailand.

The rebel statement said the Philippines "faces the grave problem of shortage and soaring price of rice. This problem has already caused malnutrition on a national scale and starvation in certain areas."

It did not give details of the reported malnutrition.

The rebels linked the current food problems and rising commodity prices to a crisis of "the world capitalist system," led by a slowdown in the United States, the Philippines' major foreign ally and trading partner.

## Angry NKorea tests short-range missiles

**SEOUL, South Korea (AP)**—North Korea test-fired a barrage of short-range missiles on Friday in apparent response to the new South Korean government's tougher stance on Pyongyang.

The launches came as the North issued a stern rebuke to Washington over an impasse at nuclear disarmament talks, warning the Americans' attitude could "seriously" affect the continuing disablement of Pyongyang's atomic facilities.

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, a conservative who took office last month, has said he would take a harder policy line on the North—a change from a decade of liberal Seoul governments who avoided confrontation to maintain a "sunshine policy" of engagement.

South Korean presidential spokesman Lee Dong-kwan said the missile tests were part of routine training. He told reporters Seoul was "closely

monitoring the situation."

"I believe North Korea would also not want a strain in inter-Korean relations," Lee said.

The South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the North's "short-range guided missile" firing was believed to be aimed at testing and improving the missile's performance. It did not give specifics, including exactly how many missiles were fired.

It was unclear where the tests took place.

### Filipino teacher kidnapped by Muslim militants freed

**MANILA, Philippines (AP)**—Muslim militants in the southern Philippines have released a teacher kidnapped in a January school attack that killed a Roman Catholic priest, police said. Senior Superintendent Wainwright Taup, the police chief of the southern province of Tawi-Tawi, said Thursday that suspected al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf guerrillas released Omar Taup after his family paid a ransom of 200,000 pesos (US\$4,880). The police chief, a distant relative of the teacher, said Omar Taup was dropped off in a public market sometime between March 15 and 17. "He is still in a state of shock and refuses to talk to anyone," the police chief was quoted as saying by the Philippine Daily Inquirer. The teacher was abducted on Jan. 15, when about 10 Abu Sayyaf gunmen raided a Catholic school in the Tawi-Tawi township of Tabawan. The gunmen shot and killed Reynaldo Roda, a Catholic priest, during the raid.

### Abandoned Japanese-Filipino kids to reunite with fathers

**MANILA, Philippines (AP)**—Three children abandoned by their Japanese fathers left Friday for Japan in what a nonprofit group said is the first case where their Filipino mothers are being allowed to go along to live and work there. The three—between the ages of 6 and 12—left with their mothers for Nagoya en route to central Shizuoka Prefecture to reclaim their Japanese heritage—and probably meet their fathers. An estimated 50,000 Japanese-Filipino children—known as "Japinos"—live here, often abandoned or orphaned by their fathers after liaisons with Filipino women, who in most cases worked as entertainers in Japan, said Akira Oka, head of the Shin-Nikkeijin Network or SNN. Some groups put the number as high as 100,000.

### PHILIPPINE BRIEFS

#### Boat sinks in southern Philippines, 13 missing

**MANILA, Philippines (AP)**—A passenger boat with 14 people on board capsized in the southern Philippines, leaving only one known survivor—a man who swam several hours to shore, officials said Friday. Most of the missing were children. Farmer Ranilo Olivo, 26, reached shore late Wednesday. He was able to report the accident to authorities the following morning, said Rhoderick Millana, a disaster relief official from Davao del Sur province. Millana said the boat overturned in the Sarangani Strait on the southern tip of the Philippines on Wednesday afternoon. Among the missing were eight children, ages 8 months to 15 years, Millana said. The passengers from three related families had just attended a kindergarten graduation rite and were on their way home when strong currents cracked the hull of the motorboat, he said.

#### Philippines to fortify presence on Spratlys

**MANILA, Philippines (AP)**—The Philippines will soon expand an existing airstrip on an island in the disputed Spratlys and fortify quarters for troops stationed there, the air force chief said Friday. The Spratlys, believed to be rich in oil, gas and fish stocks, consist of about 100 barren islets, reefs and atolls dotting the world's busiest shipping lanes in the South China Sea. Vietnam, China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei each claim all or part of the low-lying islands. Lt. Gen. Pedrito Cadungog said Friday that navy ships would start hauling building materials to Pag-asa island next month. He said the island's runway will be lengthened and eroded portions repaired for the safety of military C-130 planes. Dilapidated troop quarters will be repaired and bolstered.

# World

## US forces launch airstrikes in Iraq

**BAGHDAD (AP)**—U.S. forces stepped deeper Friday into the Iraqi government's fight to cripple Shiite militias, launching airstrikes in the southern city of Basra and firing a missile into the main Shiite stronghold in Baghdad.

The American support occurred as Iraqi troops struggled against strong resistance in Basra and retaliation elsewhere in Shiite areas—including more salvos of rockets or mortars into the U.S.-protected

Green Zone in Baghdad.

It was the first time American jets have been called to attack militia positions since Iraqi ground forces launched an operation Tuesday to clear Basra of the armed groups that have effectively ruled the streets of the country's second-largest city for nearly three years.

One militia barrage slammed into the headquarters of the Basra police command late Friday, triggering a huge fire

and explosions when one of the rounds struck a gasoline tanker, police officials said.

Earlier Friday, U.S. jets struck a building housing militia fighters and blasted a mortar team that was firing on Iraqi forces, British military spokesman Maj. Tim Holloway said without further details.

Many of those groups are believed to receive weapons, money and training from nearby Iran, the world's most populous Shiite nation.



AP  
Iraqis inspect vehicles destroyed in an airstrike in Sadr City, Baghdad, Iraq, Friday, March 28, 2008.

## Muslims denounce film criticizing Islam

**AMSTERDAM, Netherlands (AP)**—Hundreds of angry Muslims marched Friday in Pakistan and denounced a Dutch legislator's film that portrays Islam as a ticking time bomb aimed at the West. Dutch Muslims were more restrained, saying they had expected worse.

The 15-minute film—titled "Fitna," or "Strife" in Arabic—was made by anti-

immigrant lawmaker Geert Wilders and was posted on a Web site Thursday.

The host site, LiveLeak.com, removed the film Friday evening, citing threats to its staff "of a very serious nature." But the film already had been widely dispersed across the Internet on file-sharing sites.

Employing elements and symbols calculated to of-

fend Muslims, it draws on recycled footage of terrorist attacks and anti-Western, anti-Jewish rhetoric meant to alarm the native Dutch.

The film begins with the Danish cartoon image of Muhammad with a fuse in his turban—an image that provoked violent protests in Islamic countries when it was published by European newspapers two years ago.

## Raul Castro: Cubans can have cell phones

**HAVANA (AP)**—First microwaves, now cell phones. Is this the new Cuba? Raul Castro is revolutionizing his brother's island in small but significant ways—the latest in a decree Friday allowing ordinary Cubans to have cell phone service, a luxury previously reserved for the select few. The new presi-

dent could be betting greater access to such modern gadgets will quell demand for deeper change.

Many Cubans hope cell phones and new appliances are only the beginning for a post-Fidel Castro government that will improve their lives. Communist bureaucracy currently limits everything from Internet

access to home ownership.

Could cellular phones in dissidents' hands give state security forces an edge in monitoring their conversations or tracking their movements by satellite? Perhaps, but government opponents—including the few who have cell phones—already assume someone's always listening.

## Puerto Rican governor pleads not guilty

**SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)**—Gov. Anibal Acevedo Vila pleaded not guilty Friday to corruption charges in an alleged campaign finance scheme and was released on his own recognizance.

Hundreds of flag-waving supporters turned out to cheer Acevedo, who was fingerprinted and had his mug shot taken at the FBI's offices before ap-

pearing in front of a magistrate at the federal courthouse.

The governor sent a message of gratitude from inside the courthouse to his raucous supporters outside.

"We recognize the presence of the outraged Puerto Ricans here in defense of our people," he said. "We give them thanks and respect."

Acevedo appeared com-

posed after the hearing, winking at reporters as he left the courtroom.

The governor, charged with 19 counts that carry a prison sentence of up to 20 years if convicted, is the first Puerto Rican governor to face federal charges since the island became a semiautonomous U.S. commonwealth in 1952. No trial date has been set.



## Focus

# Families torn by citizenship for fallen

By HELEN O'NEILL  
AP SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**A** young, ambitious immigrant from Guatemala who dreamed of becoming an architect. A Nigerian medic. A soldier from China who boasted he would one day become an American general. An Indian native whose headstone displays the first Khanda, emblem of the Sikh faith, to appear in Arlington National Cemetery.

These were among more than 100 foreign-born members of the U.S. military who earned American citizenship by dying in Iraq.

Jose Gutierrez was one of the first to fall, killed by friendly fire in the dust of Umm Qasr in the opening hours of the invasion.

In death, the young Marine was showered with honors his family could only have dreamed of in life. His sister was flown in from Guatemala for his memorial service, where a Roman Catholic cardinal presided and top military officials saluted his flag-draped coffin.

And yet, his foster mother agonized as she accompanied his body back for burial in Guatemala City: Why did Jose have to die for America in order to truly belong?

Cardinal Roger Mahony of Los Angeles, who oversaw Gutierrez's service, put it differently.

"There is something terribly wrong with our immigration policies if it takes death on the battlefield in order to earn citizenship," Mahony wrote to President Bush in April 2003. He urged the president to grant immediate citizenship to all immigrants who sign up for military service in wartime.

"They should not have to wait until they are brought home in a casket," Mahony said.

But as the war continues, more and more immigrants are becoming citizens in death—and more and more families are grappling with deeply conflicting feelings about exactly what the honor means.

Gutierrez's citizenship certificate—dated to his death on March 21, 2003—was presented during a memorial service in Lomita, Calif., to Nora Mosquera, who took in the orphaned teen after he had trekked through Central America, hopping freight trains through Mexico before illegally sneaking into the U.S.

"On the one hand I felt that citizenship was too late for him," Mosquera said. "But I also felt grateful and very proud of him. I knew it would open doors for us as a family."

"What use is a piece of paper?" cried Fredelinda Pena after another emotional naturalization ceremony, this one in New York City where her brother's framed citizenship certificate was handed to his distraught mother. Next to her, the infant daughter he had never met dozed in his fiancée's arms.

Cpl. Juan Alcantara, 22, a native of the Dominican Republic, was killed Aug. 6, 2007, by an explosive in

Baqouba. He was buried by a cardinal and eulogized by a congressman but to his sister, those tributes seemed as hollow as citizenship.

"He can't take the oath from a coffin," she sobbed.

There are tens of thousands of foreign-born members in the U.S. armed forces. Many have been naturalized, but more than 20,000 are not U.S. citizens.

"Green card soldiers," they are often called, and early in the war, Bush signed an executive order making them eligible to apply for citizenship as soon as they enlist. Previously, legal residents in the military had to wait three years.

Since Bush's order, nearly 37,000 soldiers have been naturalized. And 109 who lost their lives have been granted posthumous citizenship.

They are buried with purple hearts and other decorations, and their names are engraved on tombstones in Arlington as well as in Mexico and India and Guatemala.

Among them:

■ Marine Cpl. Armando Ariel Gonzalez, 25, who fled Cuba on a raft with his father and brother in 1995 and dreamed of becoming an American firefighter. He was crushed by a refueling tank in southern Iraq on April 14, 2003.

■ Army Spc. Justin Onwordi, a 28-year-old Nigerian medic whose heart seemed as big as his smiling 6-foot-4 frame and who left behind a wife and baby boy. He died when his vehicle was blown up in Baghdad on Aug. 2, 2004.

■ Army Pfc. Ming Sun, 20, of China who loved the U.S. military so much he planned to make a career out of it, boasting that he would rise to the rank of general. He was killed in a firefight in Ramadi on Jan. 9, 2007.

■ Army Spc. Uday Singh, 21, of India, killed when his patrol was attacked in Habbaniyah on Dec. 1, 2003. Singh was the first Sikh to die in battle as a U.S. soldier, and it is his headstone at Arlington that displays the Khanda.

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Patrick O'Day from Scotland, buried in the California rain as bagpipes played and his 19-year-old pregnant wife told mourners how honored her 20-year-old husband had felt to fight for the country he loved.

"He left us in the most honorable way a man could," Shauna O'Day said at the March 2003 Santa Rosa service. "I'm proud to say my husband is a Marine. I'm proud to say my husband fought for our country. I'm proud to say he is a hero, my hero."

Not all surviving family members



Cpl. Juan Alcantara's mother Maria Alcantara, grieves during a special Citizenship Day naturalization ceremony in which Juan was awarded American Citizenship posthumously in this Sept. 17, 2007 file photo in New York.

feel so sure. Some parents blame themselves for bringing their child to the U.S. in the first place. Others face confusion and resentment when they try to bury their child back home.

At Lance Cpl. Juan Lopez's July 4, 2004, funeral in the central Mexican town of San Luis de la Paz, Mexican soldiers demanded that the U.S. Marine honor guard surrender their arms, even though the rifles were ceremonial. Earlier, the Mexican Defense Department had denied the Marines' request to conduct the traditional 21-gun salute, saying foreign troops were not permitted to bear arms on Mexican soil.

And so mourners, many deeply opposed to the war, witnessed an extraordinary 45-minute standoff that disrupted the funeral even as Lopez's weeping widow was handed his posthumous citizenship by a U.S. embassy official.

The same swirl of conflicting emotions and messages often overshadows the military funerals of posthumous citizens in the U.S.

Smuggled across the Mexican border in his mother's arms when he was 2 months old, Jose Garibay was just 21 when he died in Nasiriyah. The Costa Mesa police department made him an honorary police officer, something he had hoped one day to become. America made him a citizen.

But his mother, Simona Garibay, couldn't conceal her bewilderment and

pain. It seemed, she said in interviews after the funeral, that more value was being placed on her son's death than on his life.

Immigrant advocates have similar mixed feelings about military service. Non-citizens cannot become officers or serve in high-security jobs, they note, and yet the benefits of citizenship are regularly pitched by recruiters, and some recruitment programs specifically target colleges and high schools with predominantly Latino students.

"Immigrants are lured into service and then used as political pawns or cannon fodder," said Dan Kesselbrenner, executive director of the National Immigration Project, a program of the National Lawyers Guild. "It is sad thing to see people so desperate to get status in this country that they are prepared to die for it."

Others question whether non-citizens should even be permitted to serve. Mark Krikorian of the conservative Center for Immigration Studies, argues that defending America should be the job of Americans, not non-citizens whose loyalty might be suspect. In granting special benefits, including fast-track citizenship, Krikorian says, there is a danger that soldiering will eventually become yet another job that Americans won't do.

And yet, immigrants have always fought—and died—in America's wars.

During the Civil War, the Union army recruited Irish and German immigrants off the boat. Alfred Rascon, an illegal immigrant from Mexico, received the Medal of Honor for acts of bravery during the Vietnam war. In the 1990s, Gen. John Shalikashvili, born in Poland after his family fled the occupied Republic of Georgia, became chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

After the Iraq invasion, the U.S. Embassy in Mexico fielded hundreds of requests from Mexicans offering to fight in exchange for citizenship. They mistakenly believed that Bush's order also applied to nonresidents.

The right to become an American is not automatic for those who die in combat. Families must formally apply for citizenship within two years of the soldier's death, and not all choose to do so.

"He's Italian, better to leave it like that," Saveria Romeo says of her 23-year-old son, Army Staff Sgt. Vincenzo Romeo, who was born in Calabria, died in Iraq and is buried in New Jersey. A miniature Italian flag marks his grave, next to an American one.

"What good would it do?" she says. "It won't bring back my son."

But it would allow her to apply for citizenship for herself, a benefit only recently offered to surviving parents and spouses. Until 2003 posthumous citizenship was granted only through an act of Congress and was purely symbolic. There were no benefits for next of kin.

Romeo says she has no desire to apply. She says she couldn't bear to benefit in any way from her son's death. And besides, she feels Italian, not American.

Fernando Suarez del Solar just feels angry—angry at what he considers the futility of a war that claimed his only son, angry at the military recruiters he says courted young Jesus relentlessly even when the family still lived in Tijuana.

His son was just 13, Suarez del Solar said, when he was first dazzled by Marine recruiters in a California mall. For the next two years Jesus begged the family to emigrate and eventually they did, settling in Escondido, Calif., where the teen signed up for the Marines before he left high school.

Lance Cpl. Jesus Suarez Del Solar was 20 when he was killed by a bomb in the first week of the war. He left behind a wife and baby and parents so bitter about his death that they eventually divorced.

Today, his 52-year-old father has become an outspoken peace activist who travels the country organizing anti-war marches, giving speeches and working with counter-recruitment groups to dissuade young Latinos from joining the U.S. military.

"There is nothing in my life now but saving these young people," he says. "It is just something I feel have to do."

But first he had to journey to Iraq. He had to see for himself the dusty stretch of wasteland where his son became an American. In tears, he planted a small wooden cross. And he prayed for his son—and for all the other immigrants who became citizens in death.



## Life &amp; Style

## Ledger's passing stokes Joker mania

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Heath Ledger's frenzied reinvention of the Joker had fans and colleagues buzzing. His dreadful clown face was seen online by millions, and stood as the goosebump-raising image upon which nearly all early marketing of "The Dark Knight" hinged.

All this, while Ledger was still alive.

Now the Batman archfiend stands as Ledger's next-to-last performance. And while it's not the first, "The Dark Knight" has already emerged as arguably the biggest movie featuring a posthumous role in Hollywood history.

Major stars including James Dean, Clark Gable, Carole Lombard, Spencer Tracy and Will Rogers had high-profile films released after they died. The deaths of others—notably Bruce Lee and his son Brandon—created an eerie allure that heightened interest in their final films.

Yet none had the magnitude of a comic-book franchise with an illustrious 70-year history, and movies in those eras did not arrive with the fanfare of today. Certainly none had the advance word of a delirious, demented turn by an actor completely reimagining one of Hollywood's greatest villains.

"It was punk, it was 'A Clockwork Orange,' it was druggie. It was this kind of fantastic, anarchic look to him. This character who had absolutely no rules whatsoever," said Christian Bale, who returns as rich guy Bruce Wayne and his crime-fighting alter-ego Batman. "That's not like any Joker I've ever seen before, what I saw Heath do."

As the sequel to 2005 blockbuster "Batman Begins," "The Dark Knight" already was one of this year's most-anticipated films. Opening July 18, the film's must-see status has only

risen since Ledger died of an accidental prescription drug overdose Jan. 22.

"More people will come to see it because of his death," said Bill Ramey, founder of the fan Web site Batman-on-Film.com. "No doubt some people may be apprehensive about seeing it because there may be a little ghoulish factor about it. But I'm betting that more people now kind of look at it as a tribute to him, and the biggest tribute you could give someone is to go see it and enjoy his performance."

When Dean died in a car wreck in 1955, studio executives lamented "there goes the movie," figuring audiences would be scared away from his final two films, said Wes Gehring, who teaches film at Ball State University. To the contrary: "Rebel Without a Cause" and "Giant" were huge hits.

In today's anything-goes celebrity climate, it's doubtful anyone in Hollywood ever felt Ledger's death might hurt the box-office prospects for "The Dark Knight," Gehring said.

"It's a tacky thing to say, but what would have been a negative in the past now could be a positive thing," Gehring said. "I think we've done a flip-flop on pop culture. Now it might actually be a selling point for a movie where you say, 'So and so's dead. Let's go see his movie.' What might have been a hindrance in 1935 now won't be a problem."

In the days after Ledger's death, fans debated how it might affect the film.

Would distributor Warner Bros. make changes or even delay its release? Would the advertising shift away from its early focus on Ledger's demonic Joker and his mocking taunt, "Why so serious?" Would the Joker's ghastly persona disturb



This photo released by Warner Bros., shows actor Heath Ledger as The Joker in a scene from "The Dark Knight."

fans? Would viewers be able to set thoughts of his death aside as they watch his performance?

"Of course, you find more poignancy in moments, and I'm very, very aware he's not here with us," said Bale in an interview shortly after the film's opening segment—in which Ledger's Joker orchestrates a bank heist—was screened in mid-March at ShoWest, a convention for theater owners. It was the first time Bale had seen the sequence, and Ledger's death weighed on his mind.

"I can't deny that kind of threw me watching that just now," Bale

said. "You can't help but have that different feeling when I'm viewing it, especially since he's somebody I was in touch with until just recently and believed would be a future friend."

Director Christopher Nolan, who revived the franchise with "Batman Begins," said he expects the performance will speak for itself, that morbid thoughts of Ledger's death will not affect the way audiences view "The Dark Knight."

"Having seen the movie myself in such heightened and tragic circumstances, no, I don't think that's going to be the case," Nolan said. "What I found in watching

the movie myself is that you're not looking at the actor, you're not looking at the friend, you're not looking at the colleague. You're looking at the Joker. ... He inhabits this character, and it's an extraordinary icon, so it's easy to enjoy it on that level, just as a great piece of acting."

Ledger—known for serious films including "Brokeback Mountain," which earned him a best-actor Academy Award nomination—was a surprise choice for the Joker, most famously played previously with Jack Nicholson's giddy performance in 1989's "Batman."

Nolan, Ledger and their collaborators came up with a wildly different Joker, whose ominous clown makeup seems to have been finger-painted onto his face, an outer portrait of the black and twisted soul within.

Ledger's performance floored two-time Oscar winner Michael Caine, who reprises his role as Bruce Wayne's butler, Alfred. Caine's first glimpse of the character came when Ledger emerged onto the set from an elevator; in an interview last September, four months before Ledger's death, Caine said he was so startled that he forgot his lines.

"He came out of the bloody lift like a whirlwind," Caine recalled. "They said, 'It's your line, Michael.' I said, 'What is it?' Extraordinary. It will be one of the characters of next year, the Joker as played by him."

Warner Bros. executives, who declined to comment for this article, have moved ahead with "The Dark Knight" and its marketing as planned. To do anything differently would have disrespected Ledger's memory, the filmmakers said.

"The greatest testament to Heath's portrayal is to do everything that we were planning on

doing with Heath's portrayal," said producer Charles Roven. "His family knew him to feel exactly the same way. They knew how excited he was, knew how much fun he had doing it. When you see the film, it's undeniable how much fun he had playing the character."

While the "Batman" brand-name virtually assures blockbuster status for "The Dark Knight," other posthumous films have had a mixed history.

Rogers scored a posthumous hit with "Steamboat Round the Bend," as did Tracy with "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner."

Bruce Lee's "Enter the Dragon" and Brandon Lee's "The Crow" found broader audiences beyond action crowds because of their deaths. Singer Aaliyah's "Queen of the Damned" overcame bad reviews to become a modest commercial success.

Received coolly by critics, John Candy's "Canadian Bacon" and "Wagons East" were box-office duds, as was Natalie Wood's "Brainstorm."

The final films of Lombard ("To Be or Not to Be") and husband Gable ("The Misfits") earned critical acclaim and have held up over the decades but initially were disregarded by audiences.

Unlike Oliver Reed, whose death during the filming of "Gladiator" prompted the filmmakers to digitally graft his head onto another man's body to complete a scene, Ledger had finished his work on "The Dark Knight."

Ledger died with his final film, Terry Gilliam's fantasy "The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus," only half finished. Gilliam salvaged the production by casting Johnny Depp, Jude Law and Colin Farrell for the fantasy portions, each playing Ledger's character on trips through a magic mirror into a parallel realm.

## THREE WISE GUYS

## Rug stores, gay-straight guy friendships, whiskey

By JOE HEIM, JUSTIN RUDE AND DAN ZAK  
THE WASHINGTON POST

## Dear Wise Guys:

**Why are Oriental rug stores always going out of business?**

—Skeptical in Arlington

**Joe:** A couple of reasons. First, there's peer pressure. Think about it: Would you buy an Oriental rug from a store that WASN'T going out of business? And pay full price? I don't think so. But there's also the existential answer, which is that a store, every store, is—eventually—going to go out of business. How fast that happens will vary, but nothing, not even a successful company, is permanent (just ask the folks at Bear Stearns). So you can be skeptical if you wish, but these Oriental rug stores are actually engaged in truthful advertising.

■ ■ ■

## Dear Wise Guys:

**I'm an educated, professional, mainstream guy. I have a high-profile job, make a good salary, have two mortgages, am respectful of all kinds of people. I enjoy music, football, college basketball, landscaping, Home Depot—all the "regular" guy things. I also happen to be gay and in a long-term relationship (16 years) that puts some straight relationships to shame. I am completely assimilated (live in the 'burbs, where most of my friends—women and men—are straight).**

**But I could really use some friendships with other guys (preferably straight). Nothing sexual, just buddies. Although I stereotypically like Broadway show tunes, I also like the NFL and struggle with the same issues that any marriage faces. I feel like I don't belong anywhere: Most gay guys don't get it, and most straight guys are freaked out. How do I break the barriers?**

—John

**Dan:** In describing yourself, you're kind of describing me, minus the two mortgages, maybe

15 to 20 years of age and the fact that I'm a transient who has lived in five different places in the city in the past six years. So while I love the Buffalo Bills and Sabres as much as I love Stephen Sondheim, perhaps I'm not completely qualified to offer insight.

But whatever. You mention you already have straight male friends in the 'burbs, so why not strengthen those friendships? My suggestions are woefully elementary: Get a team together for a recreational sports league, or have neighbors or co-workers over regularly for barbecues this summer. If you feel as if you don't belong anywhere, start tilling your own social pasture and see what grows.

**Joe:** Sometimes the team you root for—not the team you're on—can make all the difference. The reason we don't hang out with Dan isn't that he's gay. It's that he likes the Bills.

■ ■ ■

## Dear Wise Guys:

**I have a bottle of Seagram's VO Canadian whiskey, still sealed from 1979, as noted on the neck seal. Is this safe to drink, has it aged or improved over the years, and is it**

## worth anything?

—Rodney

**Justin:** To sort this out, I caught up with Stuart Ramsay, a contributing editor for Michael Jackson's "Whiskey: The Definitive World Guide" (DK Adult, 2005), who was returning from a tequila-tasting excursion in Mexico. Bad news first: You haven't stumbled upon an "Antiques Roadshow"-style jackpot. "There were so many bottles of Seagram's VO produced back then," Ramsay says, "that its value would not have appreciated to any great degree."

On the other hand, he indicates that you probably still have a good bottle of spirits: "If the bottle is unopened and if it has a metal cap, then it won't have changed flavor. If the cap is cork and has deteriorated noticeably, then some off-flavors could have been introduced."

But let's back up for a moment—a tequila-tasting excursion in Mexico? Man, am I in the wrong line of work.

*Have a question only the Three Wise Guys can answer? Send it to wiseguys@washpost.com and await their words of wise-dom.*



# FBI: Combs/Shakur documents appear fake

**MIAMI** (AP)—Papers purporting to be FBI reports linking associates of music mogul Sean “Diddy” Combs to a 1994 attack on rapper Tupac Shakur appear to be fakes, the agency said Friday. The documents had been cited in recent Los Angeles Times and Associated Press stories.

James Sabatino, a convicted con man who is serving a federal prison sentence for fraud, filed the documents last fall in Miami federal court as part of a \$19 million lawsuit against Combs, claiming Combs never paid him for arranging a recording and video session by the late Notorious B.I.G.

The documents purported to be an FBI agent’s reports on interviews conducted in 2002 of confidential informants linking Sabatino and associates of Combs to the 1994 shooting of Shakur in New York City. The shooting triggered a feud between East and West Coast rappers that later led to the killings of Shakur and Notorious B.I.G. None of the shootings have been solved.

“We have no record of these documents in our system,” Agent Stephen Kodak said.

“They don’t appear to be legitimate.” He said no decision has been made on whether to investigate the documents and their origin.

The Times used the documents as a basis for a story earlier this month linking Combs’ associ-



Combs

ates to the first attack on Shakur. The newspaper apologized Wednesday for the story. The AP quoted from the documents when they were filed. It issued a corrective Friday.

The Web site The Smoking Gun first reported this

week that the documents appeared to be fakes. The reports were written on a typewriter, not a computer, and contained misspellings identical to ones Sabatino made in other documents, its report pointed out.

Sabatino, 31, has a long history of falsely claiming to be a major player in the rap industry and perpetrating other frauds.

He is currently serving an 11-year sentence for identity theft and fraud at a federal prison in Pennsylvania. His father once said in a letter to a judge that his son “is a disturbed young man who needed attention like a drug.”

Howard L. Weitzman, Combs’ attorney, said his client and Sabatino never had a busi-

ness relationship.

“It should be clear that Mr. Sabatino has a vivid imagination, to say the least, and his credibility quotient is zero,” Weitzman said in an e-mail.

Sabatino’s lawsuit against Combs remains pending. No trial date has been set. Calls to the attorney he claims is representing him have not been returned.

## LA Times apologizes for Shakur story

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—The Los Angeles Times apologized for using apparently fabricated documents in a story implying that a 1994 assault on Tupac Shakur was carried out by associates of Sean “Diddy” Combs, and that he knew about it ahead of time.

“The bottom line is that the documents we relied on should not have been used,” Editor Russ Stanton said in a story posted Wednesday night on the newspaper’s Web site. “We apologize both to our readers and to those referenced in the documents ... and in the story.”

Pulitzer-prize-winning reporter Chuck Philips, who wrote the story, and his supervisor,

Deputy Managing Editor Marc Duvoisin, also apologized.

The apologies followed an investigation launched by Stanton after The Smoking Gun Web site reported earlier in the day that the paper was conned by a prisoner who doctored the documents.

Combs denied that he had any prior knowledge of or involvement in the robbery and shooting of Shakur at a New York recording studio. He and other subjects of the story claimed they had been defamed by the newspaper.

“The Los Angeles Times apology is, at best, a first step,” according to a statement from Howard Weitzman, attorney for Combs, “but it doesn’t

undo the false and defamatory nature of the story, or the suspicion and innuendo that Mr. Combs has had to endure due to these untruthful allegations and the irresponsible conduct of this particular reporter. We have nothing further to say at this time.”

The Smoking Gun said the documents seemed phony because they appeared to be written on a typewriter instead of a computer and included blacked-out sections not typically found in such documents, among other problems.

The Web site claimed the documents were fabricated by a prison inmate with a history of exaggerating his place in the

rap music world.

The Times said its March 17 story was based on FBI records, interviews with people at the scene of the 1994 shooting, and statements to the FBI by an informant.

None of the sources was named.

Philips said Wednesday that a former FBI agent examined the documents in question for him and said they appeared to be legitimate.

But Philips said he wished he had done more to investigate their authenticity.

“I now believe the truth here is I got duped,” he said.

Marc Lichtman, an attorney representing rap manager James Rosemond, one of two men the story linked to the Shakur attack, had earlier demanded an apology.

“I would suggest to Mr. Philips and his editors that they immediately print an apology and take out their checkbooks—or brace themselves for an epic lawsuit,” Lichtman said Wednesday.

The shooting triggered a feud between East and West Coast rappers that led to the killings of Shakur and Notorious B.I.G.

The story said associates hoping to curry favor with Combs—who was overseeing B.I.G.’s white-hot career at the time—lured Shakur to the studio because of his disrespect toward them.

The story and related features on latimes.com attracted nearly 1 million hits—more viewers than any other story on latimes.com this year, the newspaper said.

## French recording may be world’s first

By **JASON DEAREN**  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

**SAN FRANCISCO** (AP)—At first listen, the grainy high-pitched warble doesn’t sound like much, but scientists say the French recording from 1860 is the oldest known recorded human voice.

The 10-second clip of a woman singing “Au Clair de la Lune,” taken from a so-called phonautogram, was recently discovered by audio historian David Giovannoni. The recording predates Thomas Edison’s “Mary had a little lamb” — previously credited as the oldest

recorded voice — by 17 years.

The tune was captured using a phonautograph, a device created by Parisian inventor Edouard-Leon Scott de Martinville that created visual recordings of sound waves.

Using a needle that moved in response to sound, the phonautograph etched sound waves into paper coated with soot from an oil lamp.

Giovannoni and his research partner, Patrick Feaster, began looking for phonautograms last year and in December discovered two of Scott’s — from 1857 and 1859 — in France’s patent office. Using high-resolution

optical scanning equipment, Giovannoni collected images of the phonautograms that he brought back to the United States.

“What Scott was trying to do in 1861 was establish that he was the first to arrive at this idea,” Giovannoni said. “He was depositing with the French Academy examples of his work.”

“We took those images back to Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and found that (Scott’s) technique wasn’t very developed,” Giovannoni said. “There were squiggles on paper, but it was not recording sound.”

So Giovannoni, who collaborates with many other audio historians, including scientists at Berkeley, asked the French Academy of Sciences to send digital scans of more of Scott’s papers. Those scans arrived on March 1.

“When I opened up the file, I nearly fell off my chair,” Giovannoni said. “We had beautifully recorded and preserved phonautograms, many of which had dates on them.”

While Giovannoni was excited by the images, they still needed to be translated into sound.



AP

This image provided by Isabelle Trocheris shows audio historian David Giovannoni examining the Edouard-Leon Scott de Martinville phonautograms at the French Academy of Sciences on Monday, March 10, 2008 in Paris.

Creating sound from lines scrawled on sooty paper was a job for Berkeley lab scientists Carl Haber and Earl Cornell. Haber and Cornell had previously created sound from phonautograms that Edison had created in 1878 of trains.

The scientists used optical imaging and a “virtual stylus” to read Scott’s sooty paper. They immediately got sound, but because phonautograph was hand-cranked its speed varied and that changed the re-

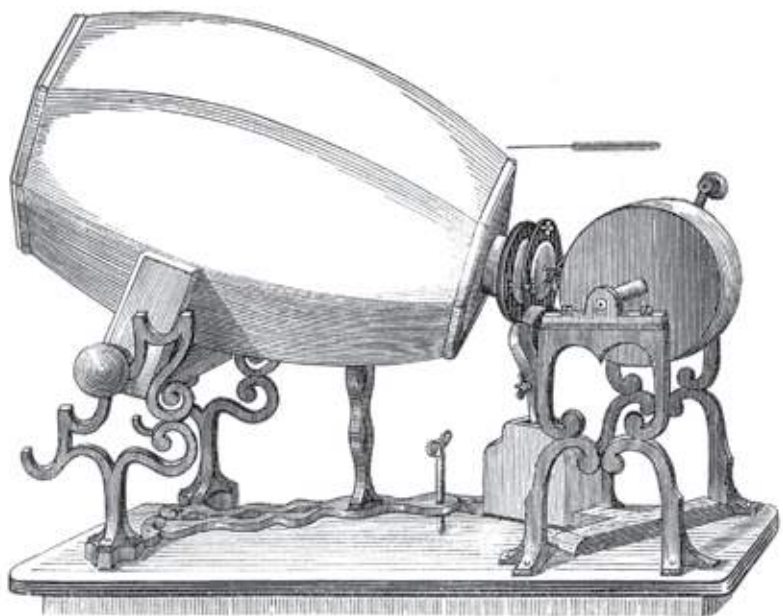
cording’s pitch.

“If someone’s singing at middle C and the crank speeds up and slows down, the waves change shape and are shifting,” said Cornell. “We had a tuning fork side by side with the recording, so you can correct the sound and speed variations.”

On March 3, Haber and Cornell sent audio back to Giovannoni, and another engineer further fine-tuned the recording to bring the voice out more from the static.

“When I first heard the recording as you hear it ... it was magical, so ethereal,” said Giovannoni. “The fact is it’s recorded in smoke. The voice is coming out from behind this screen of aural smoke.”

Scott never intended for anyone to listen to his phonautograms, but the result of this work will be played in public on Friday at the annual conference of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections at Stanford University.



AP

This sketch provided by audio historian David Giovannoni shows a phonautograph, a device created by Parisian inventor, Edouard-Leon Scott de Martinville, that captured a visual record of sound.



# Oliver Stone casting film on Pres. Bush

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Like a bill being rapidly pushed through legislation, Oliver Stone's film about President George W. Bush is expected to begin shooting within a month with a goal toward being released before the president leaves office next January.

A person close to the film, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because plans were still being formalized, said Stone's "W." will begin filming in late April in Shreveport, Louisiana. The Academy Award-winning director only began shopping his script for financing in January, but has quickly captured the interest of investors and Hollywood.

Stone has said that the film, which will focus on the life and presidency of Bush, won't be an anti-Bush polemic, but, as he told *Daily Variety*, "a fair, true portrait of the man. How did Bush go from being an alcoholic bum to the most powerful figure in the world?"

Representatives for Stone would not confirm reports in *Variety* and elsewhere about casting decisions because of unfinalized contracts. Expected to play the president is Josh Brolin, who played another Texan in the Coen brothers' Oscar-winning "No Country for Old Men."

Expected to portray First Lady Laura Bush is Elizabeth Banks, whose credits

include "The 40 Year-Old Virgin" and the upcoming "Zach and Miri Make a Porno."

"W." will be Stone's third film dealing with presidential matters, following "Nixon" and "JFK." The filmmaker has been an outspoken critic of the administration's decision to invade Iraq.

A Hollywood firebrand, Stone's films also include the Vietnam sagas "Born on the Fourth of July" and "Platoon," which won four Oscars including best picture and director, and 2006's "World Trade Center," about two policemen buried in the rubble of the towers after the Sept. 11 attacks.

## Poison drummer arrested on rape warrant

**PHILADELPHIA, Miss. (AP)**—Poison drummer Rikki Rockett was arrested on a rape warrant and his case was turned over to the district attorney's office for possible grand jury consideration, officials said Friday.

Rockett, 46, was arrested Monday at or near Los Angeles International Airport, Los Angeles police said. He was booked and released, and was awaiting an extradition decision by Mississippi prosecutors.

A woman in Mississippi filed a complaint that she was raped on Sept. 23, 2007, at the Silver Star Casino, Neshoba County sheriff's investigator Ralph Sciple said.

"The subject, Rikki Rockett, forcibly had sex with an adult in one of the hotel rooms," according to a complaint.

Sciple said the woman contacted authorities several days after the alleged attack. He did not discuss details of the case, but said his office believed the woman's complaint warranted review by the district attorney.

The casino-hotel complex in Philadelphia, about an hour northeast of Jackson, is owned by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

Rockett, whose real name is Richard Ream, did not have a listed number in the Los Angeles area and could not be reached Friday for comment.

Rockett was booked into the Los Angeles County jail under his stage name and released early Tuesday, according to jail inmate information on the county sheriff's Web site. Sciple said there was no im-



Poison drummer Rikki Rockett arrives at the Guitar Hero III "Legends of Rock" launch party in Los Angeles, in this Oct. 2007 file photo.

mediate attempt to bring Rockett back to Mississippi and a decision on extradition would await action by the district attorney.

Rockett and singer Bret Michaels founded Poison, the glam-metal band with a string of hits in the 1980s, including "Talk Dirty to Me."

## Frenchie Davis faces throat surgery

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—Frenchie Davis, the big-voiced "American Idol" contestant who found success on Broadway in "Rent," will undergo surgery to remove a vocal cord polyp.

Davis said she's eager to take care of the condition that's begun to cause tiredness and hoarseness after performances. But she's apprehensive.

"I've talked to other singers who had surgery. One girl said her voice went up. Others' voices got clearer. I'm just excited to see and a little nervous, of course. It's still surgery," Davis told *The Associated Press*.

Her main concern is the risk of losing her range, she said, but the surgeon has assured her that won't hap-

pen. Doctors had been monitoring the polyp on her left vocal cord; when it grew, they advised surgery to avoid long-term damage.

The condition likely is from overuse and singing improperly, Davis said.

"I was doing eight shows a week of 'Rent' for four years. When I had a break from 'Rent,' I was using it to sing elsewhere," she said. "Now I need a vocal coach to make sure I'm singing properly so it doesn't come back."

The surgery is scheduled for the end of April; recovery will take about a month. That will allow Davis to go ahead with a national tour of "Ain't Misbehavin'," co-starring "Idol" winner Ruben Studdard. It's set to begin

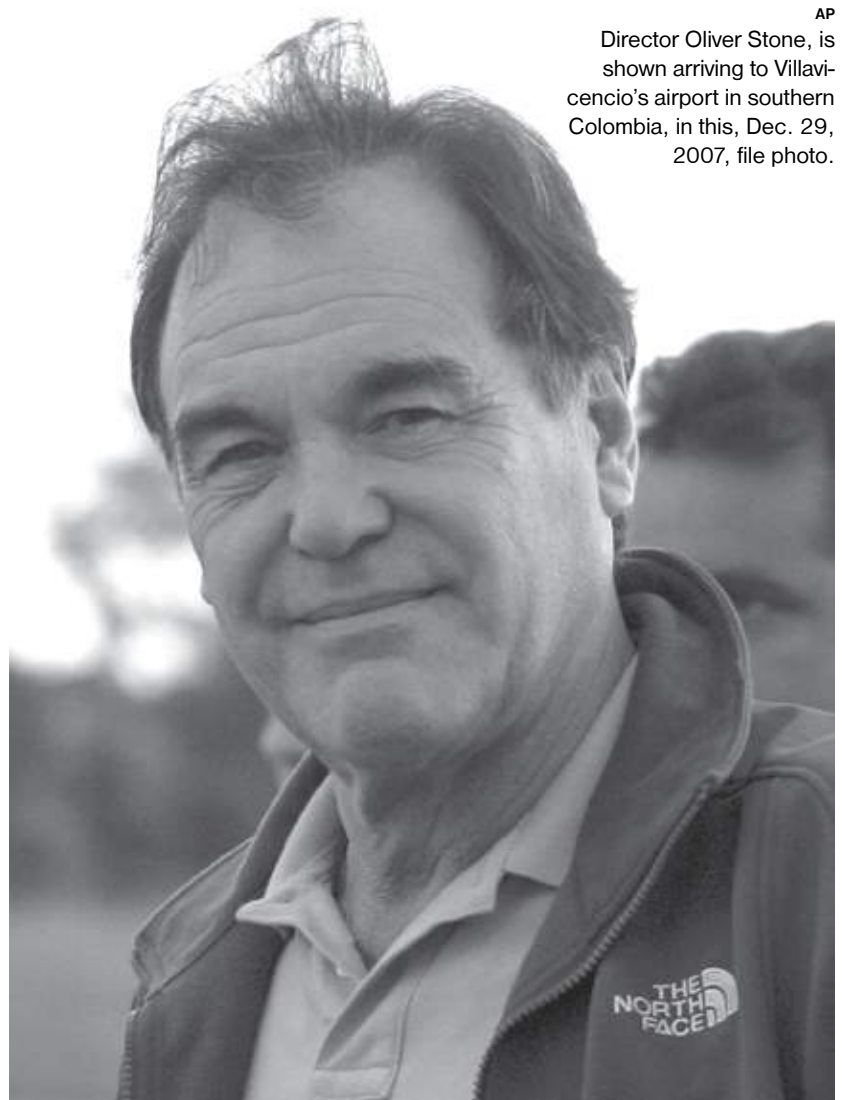
this fall in New York.

In 2003, Davis was dropped from "Idol" because of a previous appearance on an adult Web site. In contrast, the Fox talent show took no action this season when contestant David Hernandez's stint as a nightclub stripper was revealed or when racy photos of Antonella Barba surfaced last season on the Internet.

"I guess I had to be thrown to the wolves to afford these other contestants the luxury of being judged on their talent," said Davis, 28. "I guess that's what needed to happen."

It was "interesting," she added, that she was punished for something she did at age 19.

AP  
Director Oliver Stone, is shown arriving to Villavicencio's airport in southern Colombia, in this, Dec. 29, 2007, file photo.



## Egg McMuffin inventor dies at 89

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—Herb Peterson, who invented the ubiquitous Egg McMuffin as a way to introduce breakfast to McDonald's restaurants, has died, a Southern California McDonald's official said Wednesday. He was 89.

Peterson died peacefully Tuesday at his Santa Barbara home, said Monte Fraker, vice president of operations for McDonald's restaurants in that city.

He began his career with McDonald's Corp. as vice president of the company's advertising firm, D'Arcy Advertising, in Chicago. He wrote McDonald's first national advertising slogan, "Where Quality Starts Fresh Every Day."

Peterson eventually became a franchisee and was currently co-owner and operator of six McDonald's restaurants in Santa Barbara and Goleta, Fraker said.

Peterson came up with idea for the signature McDonald's breakfast item in 1972. He "was very partial to eggs Benedict," Fraker said, and worked on creating something similar.

The egg sandwich consisted of an egg that had been formed in a Teflon

circle with the yolk broken, topped with a slice of cheese and grilled Canadian bacon. It was served open-faced on a toasted and buttered English muffin.

The Egg McMuffin made its debut at a restaurant in Santa Barbara that Peterson co-owned with his son, David Peterson.

Fraker said that, although semiretired, Peterson still visited all six of his stores in the Santa Barbara area until last year when his health began to deteriorate.

"He would talk to the customers, visit with the employees. He loved McDonald's," Fraker said.

Fraker, who said he worked with Peterson for 30 years, said "he was amazing as far as giving back to the community."

"He embraced the community and the community embraced him," Fraker said. "We loved the man."

Peterson is survived by his wife, son and three daughters.

A public memorial service will be held April 23 at All Saints by the Sea church in Montecito.



AP  
Herb Peterson, the creator of the Egg McMuffin, shows off his invention in this April 1997 file photo, at one of his McDonald's franchises in Santa Barbara, Calif.



# Madonna on Britney: 'Let's go save her'

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Madonna wants the media to leave Britney Spears alone. "They need to step off," she told the "Yo on E!" satellite radio show. "For real ... Let's go save her."

Madonna, 49, said her daughter, Lourdes, 11, feels the same way.

"She knows Britney, (but) she doesn't really watch TV or read gossip stuff," the pop star said in the interview. "I think she sort of gets the drift of what's going on, and I think she feels very protective of Britney."

Madonna and husband Guy Ritchie have a son, Rocco, 7, and are raising a Malawian boy they want to adopt.

"He's the life of the party," she said of David, who she brought home from Africa in 2006. "He loves music, he's an amazing dancer. ... He's a character."

She said caring for David is no different from her raising her biological children: "I thought it was gonna be,



but it feels the same to tell you the truth."

As for speculation that her marriage is on the rocks, Madonna said: "It is ridiculous. ... I don't pay much attention to it."

The singer's spokeswoman Liz Rosenberg recently dismissed media reports that the Ritchies have split up, saying they "remain happily married." Rosenberg said that Madonna and filmmaker Ritchie, 39, were "joyfully back together at home in London" after living in separate countries for work purposes.

Madonna, whose new album "Hard Candy" arrives April 29, told "Yo on E!" that she plans to spend the summer in New York, and that she might kick off a tour this fall.

Madonna walks on stage to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in New York, in this March 10, 2008, file photo. AP

## Piers Morgan wins 'Celebrity Apprentice'

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Piers Morgan is hired.

The former British tabloid editor was crowned the winner on NBC's "The Celebrity Apprentice," triumphing over Trace Adkins.

The final task on Thursday's finale was to hold a charity event. Adkins was in charge of taking

care of the talent, The Backstreet Boys, who demanded wheatgrass juice backstage. Morgan was responsible for the auction and food.

Adkins sold more tickets, but Morgan—who has been a judge on NBC's "America's Got Talent"—raised the most money, earning an additional \$250,000 prize for his charity.

"Apprentice" host Donald Trump said Morgan "did an amazing job" and showed up his celebrity competitors (who included Gene Simmons and "Apprentice" villain Omarosa).

Trump called Adkins, whose single "You're Gonna Miss This" has climbed the country charts, a "special human being.

A beautiful guy."

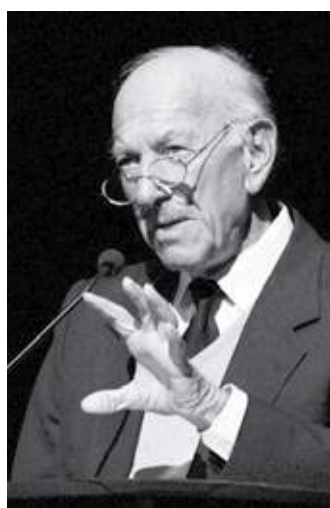
Morgan's charity is the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund, which provides help for families of U.S. military personnel who died in the line of duty. Morgan's brother has served two tours of duty in Iraq, and his brother-in-law has served two tours of duty in Afghanistan.

## Klugman sues NBC over 'Quincy' profits

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—Former "Quincy, M.E." star Jack Klugman sued NBC Universal Friday, claiming the studio is lying about the show's profits and owes him money. Klugman, 85, played the crime-busting Dr. R. Quincy on the show from 1976 to 1983.

His 1976 contract with NBC entitles him and his company, Sweater Productions, to 25 percent of the show's "net profits," according to the suit filed in Superior Court. Klugman claims his copy of the contract was lost when his agent died, and NBC has refused to provide a copy.

The lawsuit aims to force NBC to divulge the contract and award Klugman attorneys' fees.



Jack Klugman speaks at "A Tribute to Tony Randall" at New York's Majestic Theatre in this Oct. 2004 file photo.

It also asks the court to clarify the terms of the agreement.

"I recently heard that they made \$250 million and it's still on TV in Germany. I don't want their money. I want my money," Klugman told The Associated Press. "I worked my tail off. I got up at four in the morning and stayed at the studio. I did rewrite, I edited."

Calls to NBC Universal Friday seeking comment Friday were not immediately returned.

NBC provided Klugman with an accounting statement showing the series had lost \$66 million through 2006, according to the suit. However, Klugman said he believes NBC is lying, and that it made money.

## Spector defense team not ready 'til fall

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—Phil Spector made a brief court appearance Friday in which his new lawyer said he could not be ready for the music producer's murder retrial until September at the earliest.

The lawyer also filed a writ asking that a neutral judge be appointed to decide if Superior Court Judge Larry Paul Fidler should be disqualified from Spector's second trial because of alleged bias.

Fidler earlier rejected the bid to remove him, saying he was im-

partial in the case and that it was too late to file such a motion.

Spector's attorney, Doron Weinberg, filed a 44-page motion last week listing numerous alleged acts of bias by the judge. They included the imposition of a gag order limited to Spector's wife and a potential defense witness, as well as his decision to withdraw a jury instruction and craft a new one after jurors first announced they were deadlocked.

Weinberg said in the writ to the California 2nd District Court of Appeal that California

law prohibits a judge from ruling on his or her own disqualification motion.

At Friday's court session, Fidler set another hearing for May 22, when a new trial date could be set.

Spector, 67, agreed to the delay.

Spector's first trial ended in September 2007 when the jury deadlocked. Spector, famed for his "Wall of Sound" recording technique, is accused of murdering actress Lana Clarkson at his Alhambra mansion on Feb. 3, 2003.

## Close friend's affair is causing pain all around

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



**DEAR ABBY:** My closest friend, "Tina," who is married, has been having an affair for a few months. She has now decided she's no longer in love with her husband, "Hal," and wants a divorce. Tina and Hal have been in my life for several years and are like family to me.

Hal recently reached out to me for an explanation about Tina's 180-degree change in attitude, feelings and behavior. He is crushed and confused about why she wants a divorce. He told me he had asked her if she had been cheating. Of course, Tina lied to him.

I don't want to be the one to tell Hal what she's doing, but I feel I owe it to him. I'm disgusted with Tina, and it's killing me to see him in so much pain. What do you suggest? Am I really a friend if I don't tell, or should I continue keeping her dirty little secret?

—IN THE MIDDLE IN CORPUS CHRISTI

**DEAR IN THE MIDDLE:** Hal already suspects that Tina is cheating, or he wouldn't have asked for confirmation. If you "spill," it will cost you your friendship with Tina. However, from the tone of your letter, it appears that she's someone for whom you have lost respect anyway.

Tina's secret will be common knowledge soon. If you reveal it to Hal, he will not be thrilled to hear the news. There's a reason why people were afraid to give Caesar bad news. He had a habit of killing the messenger. So be prepared.

■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** My children have been cared for by a wonderful baby sitter I'll call "Sally" for two years. Mine are the only children Sally watches, and she has three of her own. Our families have a friendly relationship.

Once in a while I will stop at the grocery store on my way home, or take off from work early for a dental appointment or some personal time. It is rare, but it does happen. I always tell Sally because I want to be honest. When I do, sometimes she acts like I should have picked them up right away. I still get there on time—sometimes early—and I pay her well.

Is there an unwritten rule that sitters are only for when you are at work? I don't think I have abused her services, but sometimes I feel as though she thinks so.

—FEELING GUILTY IN ILLINOIS

**DEAR FEELING GUILTY:** If there was an unwritten rule that sitters are only for when you're at work, legions of parents would have no social life. Perhaps it's time for you to review the terms of your baby-sitting agreement with Sally. You are paying her for a service—to watch your children between specific times. As long as you are there to pick them up on time, you have no reason to feel guilty.

And I see no reason why you feel compelled to explain to her if you choose to take a "detour." Perhaps she becomes annoyed because you're reminding her that you have free time and she doesn't.

■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** My boyfriend, "Brady," and I do not share the same passions. I'm a gay rights activist and love animals. Brady is tolerant of gays, but does not love animals. (I have three cats.) Also, he is not altruistic.

"Something" is not right. I need to decide if I should go it alone because I have no intention of giving up my passions in life. What do you think?

—ON DIFFERENT PATHS IN TEXAS

**DEAR ON DIFFERENT PATHS:** I think you should continue on your own path until you find your soul mate. As nice a person as Brady may be, he's not "The One"—and that's the "something" that isn't right.

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

■ ■ ■

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more attractive person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)



Gregg Allman of the The Allman Brothers Band performs at Farm Aid on Randall's Island in this Sept. 9, 2007, file photo in New York.



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All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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**1 HOUSEWORKER (FSUN 0071)**  
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Housing provided by employer; food provided by employer & medical. Contact: Barbara Yamada @235-2624.

**1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (FSUN 0072)**  
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical reimbursable; workers compensation & insurance. Contact: RJCL Corporation dba RNV Construction @235-8778.

**1 MECHANIC (FSUN 0073)**  
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**2 MASON (FSUN 0074)**  
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# Curry, Davidson continue magical ride



**DETROIT** (AP)—Stephen Curry knocked down yet another 3, thumped

his chest and pointed skyward. Heavens yes, Davidson is marching on. Curry scored more than 30 points for a third straight game, and the 10th-seeded Wildcats pulled off another stunner Friday night, rolling over third-seeded Wisconsin 73-56 to advance to the Midwest Regional finals.

Davidson (29-6) extended the nation's longest winning streak to 25. The Wildcats will play the winner of the Villanova-Kansas game on Sunday for a trip to the Final Four.

Yes, add another defensive powerhouse to Curry's list of victims. A week after shredding Gonzaga and Georgetown's vaunted defenses, the son of former NBA sharpshooter Dell Curry dismantled the Badgers and defensive specialist Michael Flowers.

Curry outscored the Badgers all by himself in the second half, 22-20.

Wisconsin (31-5) was holding opponents to 53.9 points, best in the nation, and hadn't allowed Kansas State a single 3-point basket in the second round.

But instead of being intimidated by the big stage—not to mention the monstrous Ford Field venue—Curry and Davidson played with such ease and attitude they may as well have been in their cozy little gym back home.

And it did feel a little like home with Davidson's rowdy cheering section. The Board of Trustees popped for the trip—bus fare, tickets and a hotel room—for students who wanted to make the 11-hour ride from North Carolina, and a few hundred took them up on the offer.

The Wildcats shot 49 percent, including 12-of-24 from 3-point range. Curry finished with 33

points on 11-of-22 shooting, including six 3-pointers. Jason Richards had 11 points and 13 assists.

When the final buzzer sounded, the Davidson fans bounced up and down and a few chanted, "Rock, chalk, Jayhawk!" in reference to top-seeded Kansas. The Wildcats, meanwhile, calmly shook hands as if they expected to be here all along. And why not, when they have someone as sensational as Curry.

This marked the second time in three tournaments that a double-digit seed got this far. In 2006, 11th-seeded George Mason reached the Final Four. This is the farthest Davidson has advanced since Lefty Driesell's squad reached the regional finals in 1969, where the Wildcats lost to North Carolina.

The big, brawny Badgers were supposed to overpower Davidson, but it was Wisconsin that looked overmatched.

Despite four players in double figures, the Badgers never found their rhythm offensively. And the defense that was so fearsome all year never materialized.

Time and again Wisconsin would score only to have Davidson race down the court and make a basket of its own a mere seconds later.

Still, the Badgers were within 48-45 with 13:48 to play on Marcus Landry's jumper. That's when Curry took over.

He made a 3, and Richards stole the ball on the other end. Racing upcourt, Richards found Curry camped in the corner all by himself and dished off. Joe Krabbenhoft—a member of the Big Ten's all-defensive team—sprinted toward Curry and jumped, hoping to block the shot.

But Curry calmly waited until Krabbenhoft flew by him and then, with that silky smooth



Davidson coach Bob McKillop leads his team off the court after beating Wisconsin, 73-56, in an NCAA Midwest Regional semifinal basketball game Friday, March 28, 2008, in Detroit.

shot that's becoming a signature of this year's tournament, made another 3 to put Davidson up 54-45 with 13:03 to play.

As his teammates cheered, Curry thumped his chest and pointed high. The basket gave him 23 points—twice as many as anybody else on the court—and was his fifth 3-pointer of the night.

And he wasn't done yet.

Davidson had run the shot clock almost all the way down, looking for something. Curry finally took an off-balance shot from NBA 3-point range, falling as he released the ball. No matter. It was good, just like almost everything else he did Friday night.

And a minute later, he scored on a sweet inside reverse, drawing a foul and the admiration of everybody in the arena—including LeBron James.

The NBA star had praised Curry earlier this week and, on

the eve of a game against the Detroit Pistons, was parked a few rows behind the Wildcats bench with the rest of the exuberant Davidson fans.

Flowers led the Badgers with 12. Brian Butch and Jason Bohannon added 11 each.

## Kansas 72, Villanova 57

At Detroit, Russell Robinson drove down the left side of the court and tossed the ball off the glass to Brandon Rush, who slammed home the carom. And to think Rush said it was a bad pass. "I wasn't expecting that at all," he said. But even when Kansas is off, its jaw-dropping talent is too much.

Rush scored 16 points and Robinson had 15 as the top-seeded Jayhawks toyed with Villanova 72-57 Friday night to earn a spot in the Midwest Regional final.

The Jayhawks (34-3) will

be a huge favorite to end 10th-seeded Davidson's stay in the NCAA tournament and advance to the Final Four for the first time since 2003.

## Memphis 92, Michigan State 74

At Houston, Pity those poor, vulnerable Memphis Tigers. You know, the ones who just made mincemeat out of yet another team that was supposed to end their stay in the NCAA tournament. This time, they took it out on Michigan State, embarrassing yet again all those naysayers who suggested Memphis was the most suspect of the top seeds in this year's NCAA tournament.

The final score Friday night: Memphis 92, Michigan State 74, but really, it was worse than that.

Next up in the South Regional, a game Sunday against Texas

with a trip to the Final Four on the line, though the message on this overwhelming night was clear: Don't mess with Memphis.

"Everyone picked us to lose. We were the upset special," Memphis coach John Calipari said. "That was us. We were going to get outplayed, outcoached, outskilled, outthustled, out-thus, out-that, and we can't shoot free throws."

Didn't quite play out that way.

## Texas 82, Stanford 62

At Houston, All those hours on the exercise bike, all those yummy desserts he skipped - it all finally paid off for Texas center Dexter Pittman.

The guy with the wide body and the baby face used every ounce of his girth to pound and pester Stanford's 7-foot Lopez twins, wearing them down like a boxer throwing body blows. Once they slowed,

D.J. Augustin and Texas' usual stars ripped off a 20-3 run, sending the second-seeded Longhorns past the Cardinal 82-62 in an NCAA South Regional semifinal Friday night.

"Dex did a great job," said Augustin, who scored eight of his 23 points during the game-breaking run. "He put his body against him and I don't think Brook could handle that weight."

With Pittman helping answer the question of how the Longhorns would handle the Cardinal's big guys, his little teammates did the rest.

Damion James scored 18 points and A.J. Abrams scored 12. Augustin added seven assists and five rebounds and Justin Mason had seven points, eight rebounds and six assists, providing plenty of thrills for the tens of thousands of Texas (31-6) fans at Reliant Stadium.

# Baird takes 1-stroke lead at Zurich Classic

**AVONDALE, Louisiana** (AP)—Briny Baird shot a 3-under 69 in the second round to take a one-stroke lead over Peter Lonard and Jay Williamson halfway through the Zurich Classic on Friday.

"It didn't feel quite as good as probably the scorecard will make out," Baird said. "I didn't play as well today. My swing felt a little loose at times, but to get in with a 3 under, I was very pleased."

Baird birdied the final two holes. Good enough to keep him on the golf course this weekend rather than in a boat. He planned to go fishing but bad weather kept him off the water.

"I screwed that up," Baird joked.

Bubba Watson, playing alongside Steve Elkington and Shigeki Maruyama, blamed Elkington for making noise while he was teeing off. The incident happened on the 10th tee and the trio left the course after the round without shaking hands.

"I heard some movement, and who knows what it was," Watson said. "I was just over the ball, and just trying to make the cut and trying to play better and not getting the right breaks. I was already mad for the day, and I just took it out on them, and I shouldn't have."

Tournament director Arvin

Ginn said the incident was resolved quickly at the scoring area.

"In the heat of the battle these players, they're very high-keyed at this point in time, and nobody can say it any better than Bubba said it a little while ago," Ginn said. "He gave a total apology to the media, total apology to the tournament, to the players, to anyone that might have seen or heard any part of it."

Watson said he felt he and Elkington settled the matter.

"We hugged it out," Watson said. "Everything is good. He's not mad. He's looking at me like a son basically because I'm a lot

younger than him. He just took me aside and said, 'Be stronger in what you're doing and make sure you don't do that.'"

Watson shot a 69 to finish at 2-under 142. Elkington (71) was in a group of players tied for sixth at 5 under.

Baird is making his 254th career start on the tour without a victory. His best finishes were a tie for second at the 2001 John Deere Classic, and ties for second at the 2003 Buick Open and 2004 Funai Classic.

Baird has made the cut in seven of nine tournaments this year. He hopes that has taught him how to handle



weekend play.

"If I go out there and can stay focused on what I'm doing and play each shot, then that's the hardest part about this game," he said. "You know, all that talk about it's 90 percent mental, I think that's a load of you-know-what. I think it's 99 percent mental."

Williamson—who played much of the last two seasons on the Nationwide Tour—birdied the first hole and added birdies on No. 7, 11 and 15 in shooting 69. A bogey on 12 prevented him from catching Baird.

"I've got to putt better," said Williamson, who iced his right shoulder after the round. "I've got to be more confident with my stroke."

Lonard followed up an opening 67 with a 70. At one point,

he was 10 under with a four-shot lead, but that was before bogeys on 15, 17 and 18.

"The first one was just up against the face and I had to chip it out sideways," Lonard said. "The one on 18 was about 80 to 100 yards off-line, so I suppose I deserve that one. You've got to hit fairways, that's the name of the game."

Defending champ Nick Watney (67) was two strokes back at 6 under.

"I played a nice round to get back in the tournament," Watney said. "Hopefully I'll keep it going on the weekend."

Eighty-one players made the cut at even-par 144. Under the tour's revised cut policy, the field will be cut to the low 70 players and ties after the third round.



# Kobe scores 53 points in Lakers' loss

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—Rudy Gay led five players in double figures with 28 points and the Memphis Grizzlies beat the Los Angeles Lakers 114-111 despite 53 points by Kobe Bryant against the NBA's worst road team Friday night.

The Lakers lost their second in a row to another of the NBA's lesser teams, having been beaten by Charlotte on Wednesday night. The latest loss kept them from joining New Orleans and San Antonio in a three-way tie for the Western Conference lead.

Bryant scored 50 or more points for the 23rd time and the second this month. He had 52 against Dallas on March 2. The Lakers fell to 16-7 when he goes for that many.

He was limited to six points in the fourth quarter, when the Lakers nearly erased all of a 10-point deficit. He had 10 rebounds and one assist while taking 37 of the Lakers' 94 shots. They attempted a franchise record 45 3-pointers, making 15.

Darko Milicic had 22 points and 12 rebounds, Hakim Warrick 16 points, Kyle Lowry 11 and Mike Miller 10 points and 10 rebounds for the Grizzlies, who are 6-30 on the road and 2-20 away from home against Western Conference teams.

The Grizzlies led by 10 early in the fourth, their largest lead of the game.

Sasha Vujacic hit a 3-pointer to cut the Lakers' deficit to 109-106 with 3:03 remaining. Miller missed a 3-pointer, but the Lakers couldn't convert on their end despite four attempts on the same possession, including one by Bryant.

Lowry scored for Memphis, then Vujacic hit another 3-pointer to draw the Lakers within 111-109 with 50 seconds left.

Lamar Odom missed a 3-pointer after Bryant, tied up in the lane, fed him on the right baseline. Ronny Turiaf fouled Lowry, who made both for a 113-109 lead.

Turiaf scored inside to get the Lakers back within two after

Odom and Vujacic missed. Gay got fouled and made the second of two for a 114-111 lead. Luke Walton inbounded the ball on the Lakers' final play, but he turned it over and Milicic got the steal as time expired.

Bryant notched 47 points through the first three quarters. He scored the Lakers' first seven points, including his seventh and eighth 3-pointers, for a 61-56 lead. The Grizzlies tied it at 63 before a basket by Derek Fisher, a Bryant dunk and his ninth 3-pointer, gave the Lakers their largest lead, 70-63.

Memphis closed the third by outscoring Los Angeles 26-10, including seven by Miller and

scorer in double figures at half-time, notching 34 points while taking 22 of their 52 shots and 7 of their 9 free throw attempts. He had nine points in a 13-2 spurt that gave the Lakers a 51-43 lead, but Memphis closed on a 10-2 run to tie the game at 53 going into the break.

## Celtics 112, Hornets 92

At Boston, the Boston Celtics moved closer to wrapping up the NBA's top record overall by avenging last weekend's loss in New Orleans and beating the Hornets.

Paul Pierce scored 27 points, Kevin Garnett added 21, and Eastern Conference leader

Atlanta opened the gap to New Jersey to 1-1/2 games in the race for the last playoff spot.

Mike Bibby scored 30 points for the Hawks, who were up 72-50 with 7 minutes left in the third quarter.

The Bulls twice closed within a point in the final minutes and almost forced overtime. Ben Gordon, who scored 16 points in the fourth, got off a long 3-point attempt that rimmed out as the horn sounded.

## Pacers 123, Nets 115

In Indianapolis, Danny Granger scored 26 points as Indiana downed New Jersey.

The Pacers moved within a game of the Nets, and 2-1/2 games of Atlanta, which holds the last Eastern Conference playoff berth.

## Suns 107, 76ers 93

In Philadelphia, Amare Stoudemire scored 22 points to lead Phoenix over Philadelphia.

Raja Bell had 20 for the Suns, who avoided their first three-game losing streak of the season.

## Raptors 103, Knicks 95

In Toronto, Chris Bosh had 29 points and 10 rebounds as Toronto beat New York.

Rasho Nesterovic added 18 points for the Raptors.

The Knicks have won just two of their past 15 games.

## Spurs 99, Timberwolves 84

In San Antonio, the home side picked up its sixth straight win with a victory over Minnesota.

Manu Ginobili 16 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter for the Spurs, whose winning streak had moved them from fifth in the Western Conference to second, and now only behind New Orleans on percentage.

## Magic 103, Bucks 86

In Milwaukee, Orlando brought up a franchise-record 24th road victory with a win over Milwaukee.

Dwight Howard had 25 points and 11 rebounds for the Magic, who won only 15 road games last season.

The Bucks lost their ninth game in 10.

## Jazz 121, Clippers 101

In Salt Lake City, Carlos Boozer scored 34 points and Deron Williams had 32 to overcome the loss of the three other Utah starters and beat a reeling Los Angeles.

Mehmet Okur and Ronnie Brewer were unavailable through illness and Andrei Kirilenko left in the first quarter with a calf injury, but Williams and Boozer topped 30 points together for the first time.

## Wizards 114, Kings 108

In Sacramento, California, Antawn Jamison had 25 points and 12 rebounds as Washington used a big third quarter to beat Sacramento.

## Bobcats 96, SuperSonics 93

In Seattle, Raymond Felton hit a crucial basket along with a pair of free throws in the final minute to help lift Charlotte over Seattle.

Felton hit a 20-footer with 49.8 seconds left to give the Bobcats a 92-91 lead. The Sonics lost the ball on the next possession, and their chance to respond.



Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant, right, wheels past Memphis Grizzlies' Mike Miller during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles, Friday, March 28, 2008. Bryant scored 34 points in the first half.

five each by Gay and Milicic that put the Grizzlies ahead 89-80. Bryant didn't score any of the Lakers' points and was on the bench for the final 2:47 of the spurt, watching his teammates miss a series of 3-pointers and D.J. Mbenga foul out.

That brought Chris Mihm into the game, just more than a month since he had right heel surgery. Prior to that, he'd been sidelined with right ankle problems for several weeks.

Bryant was the only Lakers'

opened its advantage to six games over the idle Detroit Pistons with 10 games left.

The Hornets had a five-game winning streak halted and saw their Western Conference lead cut to one game over San Antonio.

## Hawks 106, Bulls 103

In Atlanta, the home team held on after nearly blowing a 22-point lead against a slumping Chicago, giving themselves some breathing space in the Eastern Conference playoff race.

# Yes to Jones Cup, no to Champions Cup—PBA

**MANILA, Philippines**—The Philippine Basketball Association has given its approval on its players' stint in the Jones Cup in July but not on the SEABA Champions Cup in May.

The PBA Board made its decision on the request of the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas in a meeting Tuesday.

"Yes, we're willing to lend our players for the Jones Cup but we regret to inform the SBP that we cannot send the PBA All-Filipino champion Sta. Lucia Realty to the FIBA Asia Champions Cup because of conflict of schedule," said PBA

Board chairman Tony Chua.

"We tried to find ways to accommodate SBP's invitation for the Champions Cup pero talagang hindi pwede," Chua added.

Chua said they would be able to play in the Jones Cup in July since three or four PBA teams would already be available for the job by then.

The Board chair is hoping the SBP leadership approaches the PBA for the drafting of a new memorandum of agreement concerning the pro

league's participation in international competitions.

"Most likely, we're reverting to the three-conference format next season. Hopefully, we could draft a new MOA para hindi naman kami nabibigla sa invitations nila," said Chua.

The PBA and the SBP, forerunner Basketball Association of the Philippines, had an MOA which lapsed after the FIBA Asia Olympic qualifier in Tokushima last year.

After being informed of the PBA Board decision, SBP ex-

ecutive director Patrick Gregorio immediately wrote Harbour Centre president Mikee Romero a letter, offering to the four-peat PBL champion team the invitation declined by the PBA.

Harbour Centre is set to compete in the SEABA Champions Cup in Jakarta next month. Win or lose, the Philippines is seeded in the FIBA Asia Champions Cup being a semifinalist last year in Iran.

Gregorio said forging a new agreement with the PBA could well be calendared in the SBP board meeting on April 4. ([www.pba.com.ph](http://www.pba.com.ph))

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES									
NBA STANDINGS									
EASTERN CONFERENCE									
Atlantic Division									
	W	L	Pct	GB					
y-Boston	57	15	.792		Brian Davis	71	68	139	
Toronto	37	35	.514	20	Cameron Beckman	68	71	139	
Philadelphia	37	36	.507	20 1/2	Marco Dawson	71	68	139	
New Jersey	31	42	.425	26 1/2	Tim Clark	73	66	139	
New York	20	52	.278	37	Dean Wilson	66	73	139	
Southeast Division									
x-Orlando	47	27	.635		Chez Reavie	67	72	139	
Washington	38	34	.528	8	John Merrick	72	67	139	
Atlanta	32	40	.444	14	Parker McLachlin	72	67	139	
Charlotte	27	45	.375	19	Tim Wilkinson	71	68	139	
Miami	13	59	.181	33	Steve Elkington	68	71	139	
Central Division									
x-Detroit	51	21	.708		Jeff Maggert	70	70	140	
Cleveland	40	32	.556	11	Todd Hamilton	70	70	140	
Indiana	30	43	.411	21 1/2	Rocco Mediate	70	70	140	
Chicago	28	44	.389	23	Nathan Green	71	69	140	
Milwaukee	24	47	.338	26 1/2	Roland Thatcher	70	70	140	
WESTERN CONFERENCE									
Southwest Division									
New Orleans	49	22	.690		Nicholas Thompson	69	71	140	
San Antonio	50	23	.685		Woody Austin	69	71	140	
Houston	49	23	.681	1/2	Joe Durant	69	71	140	
Dallas	45	27	.625	4 1/2	Padraig Harrington	71	70	141	
Memphis	19	53	.264	30 1/2	Jon Mills	71	70	141	
Northwest Division									
Utah	48	25	.658		Carlos Franco	71	70	141	
Denver	44	28	.611	3 1/2	Ted Purdy	70	71	141	
Portland	38	35	.521	10	Carl Pettersson	71	70	141	
Minnesota	18	53	.254	29	Steve Flesch	69	72	141	
Seattle	17	56	.233	31	Pat Perez	71	70	141	
Pacific Division									
L.A. Lakers	49	24	.671		Harrison Frazar	69	73	142	
Phoenix	48	24	.667	1/2	Justin Bolli	74	68	142	
Golden State	44	27	.620	4	Patrick Sheehan	69	73	142	
Sacramento	32	40	.444	16 1/2	Troy Matteson	69	73	142	
L.A. Clippers	21	51	.292	27 1/2	J.J. Henry	74	68	142	
x-clinched playoff spot					Dudley Hart	73	69	142	
y-clinched division					Tim Petrovic	74	68	142	
Yesterday's Games									
Toronto 103, New York 95					Andres Romero	73	69	142	
Indiana 123, New Jersey 115					James Driscoll	75	67	142	
Phoenix 108, Philadelphia 93					Mark Hensby	74	68	142	
Atlanta 106, Chicago 103					John Mallinger	69	73	142	
Boston 112, New Orleans 92					Bubba Watson	73	69	142	
Orlando 103, Milwaukee 86					Jason Bohn	74	68	142	
San Antonio 99, Minnesota 84					Kenny Perry	71	71	142	
Utah 121, L.A. Clippers 101					Mark Calcavecchia	71	71	142	
Washington 114, Sacramento 108					Kevin Sutherland	71	71	142	
Charlotte 96, Seattle 93					Matt Jones	74	68	142	
Memphis 114, L.A. Lakers 111					Craig Barlow	72	71	143	
PGA ZURICH CLASSIC SCORES									
AVONDALE, Louisiana (AP) - Scores									
Friday from the Zurich Classic, a \$6.2 million (\$4 million) U.S. PGA Tour event at the 7,341-yard, par-72 TPC Louisiana:									
SECOND ROUND									
Briny Baird	67	69	136		Brian Bateman	73	70	143	
Peter Lonard	67	70	137		Jonathan Byrd	72	71	143	
Jay Williamson	68	69	137		John Senden	74	69	143	
Tommy Armour III	70	68	138		Cliff Kresge	75	68	143	
Nick Watney	71	67	138		Mathew Goggin	73	70	143	
Shigeki Maruyama	70	68	138		Chris Stroud	72	71	143	
					Bubba Dickerson	70	73	143	
					Johnson Wagner	71	72	143	
					Frank Lickliter II	72	71	143	
					Zach Johnson	72	71	143	
					Robert Karlsson	70	73	143	
					Jose Coceres	75	68	143	
					WC Liang	71	72	143	
					Charles Warren	70	74	144	
					Tom Pernice, Jr.	73	71	144	
					George McNeill	71	73	144	
					Daniel Chopra	71	73	144	
					Stewart Cink	73	71	144	
					Paul Goydos	74	70	144	
					Jonathan Kaye	74	70	144	
					Brandt Jobe	70	74	144	
					Chip Sullivan	76	68	144	
					Jim Park	70	74	144	
					Bob Estes	72	72	144	
					Retief Goosen	73	71	144	
					Alex Cejka	72	72	144	
					Jeff Quinney	71	73	144	
					Robert Gamez	70	74	144	
					Mathias Gronberg	75	69	144	
					Rich Beem	73	71	144	
					Scott Sterling	71	73	144	
					Brett Rumford	72	72	144	

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



# The Week in Sports

## Different paths for 2 sporting events

By **JON PEREZ**  
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REPORTER

The 2008 Oceania Athletics Association Area Championship and Grand Prix Series hosted by Saipan, and the Pohnpei Micronesian Basketball Tournament in Kolonia took separate routes this week.

While the OAA Championship and Grand Prix Series is assured of taking place this June, the MBT got cancelled since only three countries will be fielding teams in this year's games.

The OAA Championship and Grand Prix Series was in danger of being postponed after the Northern Marianas Athletics learned the Oleai Track and Field Facility inside the Susupe Sports Complex does not meet the measurement standards of the International Association of Athletics Federation.

NMA, however, said IAAF has approved funding the measurement certification that would certify the Oleai track,

which is a requirement in terms of conducting the Area Championship and Grand Prix Series on a certified track.

The MBT, meanwhile, was postponed until next year since only host Pohnpei and Guam will be competing in the men's and women's divisions, while Kosrae will only send a men's team.

Chuuk, Yap, CNMI, Nauru, and Kiribati have already informed Jim Tobin, who co-chairs the 2008 Pohnpei MBT with Castro Joab, about their inability to send teams to the competition.

Tobin said Palau and the CNMI asked to postpone the MBT until next year while he has yet to receive any word from the Marshall Islands.

Former CNMI top netter Kana Aikawa, who won two gold and a bronze in the 6th Saipan Micronesian Games in 2006, tried her luck in golf after making it to the University of Hawai'i Manoa Rainbow Wahine women's team.



**JON PEREZ**  
Action in the Friends of the Marianas Inter-Color Basketball League resumed on Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium with two teams earning wins against separate opponents.

Aikawa, a senior at UH-Manoa, finished the Dr. Donnis Thompson Invitational tied for 83rd with scores of 84, 88,

and 880 for a total of 260 at the Kane'ohe Klipper Golf Course in Kane'ohe, O'ahu, Hawaii.

The Rainbow Wahine finished fourth overall with a final score of 303-302-323 for a total of 928. They finished behind champion Oklahoma State University, University of Arizona, and Arizona State.



**JON PEREZ**  
An O'Acres runner tries to get back on first base before being tagged by a Kagman Lion Hearts player in this file photo taken during their game in the Junior league division of the Saipan Little League at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

Trench Tech Purebred Saipan Gym moved to their new home located in Afetna Square or Babauta estate behind the Sablan Building in San Antonio.

Trench Tech's new home is a former garment factory behind the Immigration Building in San Antonio. It is possible that the next Trench Warz or Rites of Passage will be held at their new gym.

The duo of Jojo Lazaro and Christy Villaflor bested five other pairs to rule the Northern Marianas Badminton Federation

weekend open, which returned after a weeklong break last week at the Ada Gym.

The Northern Mariana Islands Triathlon Federation also held a general membership meeting where longtime Saipan resident and triathlon enthusiast Russ Quinn was elected as the new president.

Quinn replaced former president Brad Ruzsala, who stepped down due to conflicts with his work schedule and obligations in the CNMI National Men's Football Team.



**JON PEREZ**  
SaipanCell Patriots' Jared Manglona moves back to avoid being hit by a pitch in their Majors division game against the Wells Fargo-As Matuis Twins in the Saipan Little League on Wednesday at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field.



**JON PEREZ**  
SaipanCell Patriots pitcher Chris Mizer winds up a pitch in their game against the Wells Fargo-As Matuis Twins in the Majors division of the Saipan Little League on Wednesday at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field.



**BY JON PEREZ**  
The Oleai Track and Field Facility inside the Susupe Sports Complex will receive a funding grant from the International Association of Athletics Federations that would certify the Oleai track.

**JON PEREZ**  
Trench Tech Purebred Saipan Gym co-owner Cuki Alvarez, from left, signs the lease agreement while Ben Babauta of the Babauta Estate, and Randy Taylor look on.



**JON PEREZ**  
Pitcher Darren Jones of the Wells Fargo-As Matuis Twins prepares to throw at the plate in their Majors division game against the SaipanCell Patriots in the Saipan Little League on Wednesday at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field.



**JON PEREZ**  
Jesus Iguel, from left, and Luis Iguel of the O'Acres tries to block a Tyce Mister of Menudo in this file photo taken in their first round match in the men's division of the 2008 Indoor Volleyball Winter League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.





## Different paths for 2 sporting events

The 2008 Oceania Athletics Association Area Championship and Grand Prix Series hosted by Saipan, and the Pohnpei Micronesian Basketball Tournament in Kolonia took separate routes this week.

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# Saipan Tribune Sports

## Curry, Davidson continue magical ride

Stephen Curry knocked down yet another 3, thumped his chest and pointed skyward. Heavens yes, Davidson is marching on.

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

# Fighting Hands Foundation formed

By JON PEREZ  
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REPORTER

The people behind the Trench Tech Purebred Saipan Gym has formed a non-profit and non-governmental organization to help the CNMI youth learn various livelihood projects and keep them away from vices.

Trench Tech Purebred Saipan Gym owners Cuki Alvarez and Randy Taylor said they are in the process of completing all documents and other requirements to register the Fighting Hands Foundation.

The Fighting Hands Foundation will be Trench Tech Gym's arm that will handle all community related programs of their group.

"These hands are not only meant for fighting inside the cage but these hands are also meant for creating things and

helping the needy," said Taylor in a recent interview.

Alvarez and Taylor said they plan to have a trade school at Trench Tech's new facility in Afetna Square in San Antonio. Trench Tech's permanent home is located at the Babauta estate behind the Sablan Building. The facility is built on the estate of Vicente SN Babauta.

"We help build good character and discipline to all our students. We help them gain their self-confidence and have pride in everything they do. More than training their fighting skills we want to help them learn other skills that would help them earn money," said Taylor.

Alvarez said some of the livelihood projects they plan to have at the planned after kids program at the trade school are woodworking, T-shirt print-

ing, automotive repair, basic construction, and auto-marine. "We want to teach them to earn on their own. We are open to other ideas."

Alvarez and Taylor said they believe in the saying: Give a man a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for life."

"The trade school will be beneficial to the community. They will no longer have to go out of

Saipan to learn these skills. All that they will learn can be applied here in our community," said Alvarez.

Ben Babauta, who is one of Vicente's sons, said he would support the various projects of the Fighting Hands Foundation. "I am a known community man and if it is beneficial to the kids I am with them 100 percent. The kids need various

after school activities."

Trench Tech's new home is an old garment factory warehouse measuring 15,708 square feet and is capable of accommodating between 1,500 to 2,000 fight fans.

Trench Tech's new gym is an air-conditioned facility with ample parking space that can accommodate more than 100 cars.

Trench Tech will follow the same regular business hours for training from 5pm to 8pm from Mondays to Saturdays. They are still selling the Trench Tech clothing line and other gear.

They are also preparing to offer more MMA classes like their planned after-school program for teenagers from 3pm to 5pm and women's classes. Alvarez said they would inform everyone of future developments.

For more information, call Alvarez at 483-4MMA or 483-4662.

## DCCA on track for undefeated season



Sakisat

By JON PEREZ  
jon\_perez@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

With the pennant already in the bag, defending champion Department of Community and Cultural Affairs is aiming to close out the 2007 season of the Inter-government Slow-pitch Softball League men's division undefeated.

DCCA won its 17th straight game on Wednesday, dealing Legislature a 12-2 beating, to complete a sweep of the elimination round and now enjoys the top seeding as the league enters the playoff round.

The Top 8 teams after the single-elimination round advances to the playoffs.

Julian Camacho, Mel Sakisat, Joey Dela Cruz, and Mario Sablan all went 2-for-3 at the

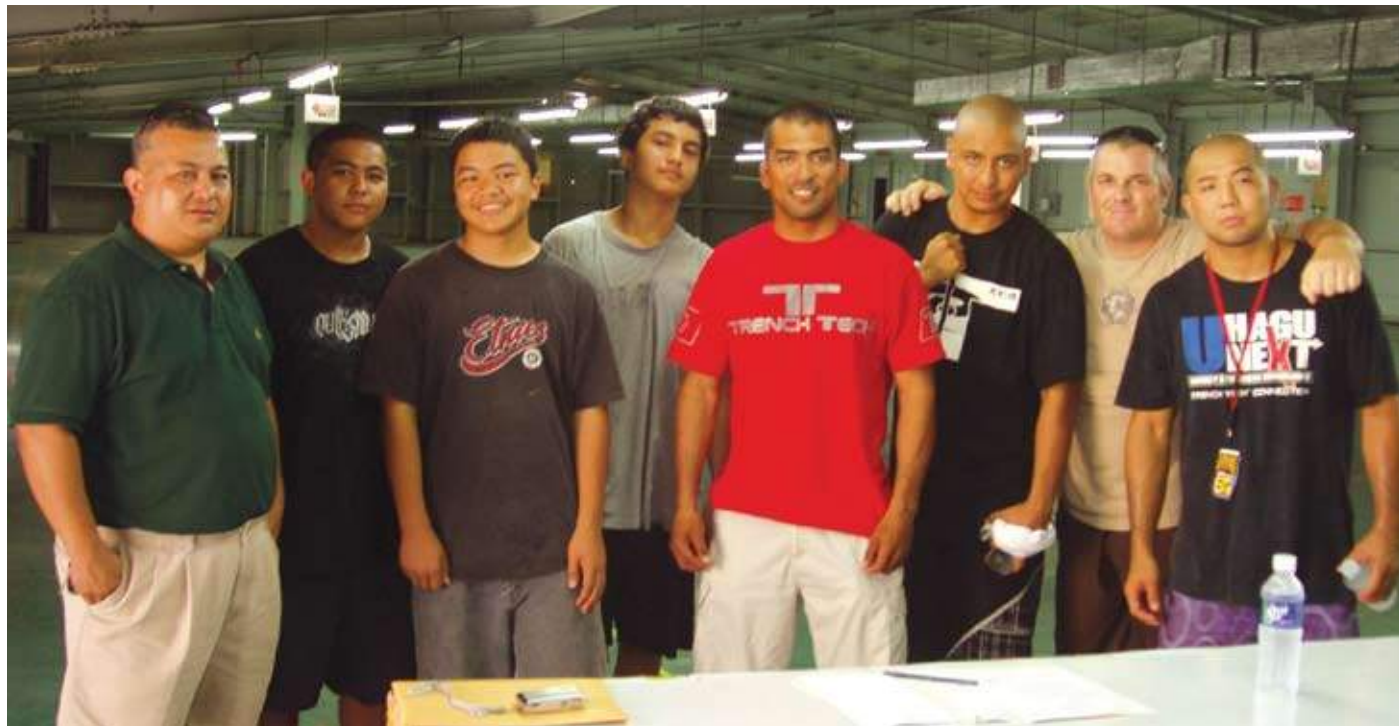
plate to lead DCCA's easy win.

Camacho and Sakisat also had two-run home runs in the first and second innings, respectively. Camacho also scored three runs, had a triple, and four RBIs, while Sakisat made two runs and had two RBIs.

Dela Cruz scored twice and had a double, while Sablan reached home plate once and had a two-RBI double in the top of the fifth.

In other games, Commonwealth Health Center shored up its playoff bid with a 19-5 blasting of Division of Parks & Recreation, while Department of Labor coasted to a 16-6 triumph over Law & Order.

Defending women's champion DCCA also had an easy win when they breezed past CHC, 19-9.



JON PEREZ

Trench Tech Purebred Saipan Gym co-owners Cuki Alvarez, fifth left, and Randy Taylor, seventh left, join Trench Tech co-instructor Tetsuji Kato, right, their students, and Ben Babauta for a group photo in last Tuesday's signing of the lease agreement.

## Ridunkulous

Ridunkulous is slang for very ridiculous, as used in this sentence, "I have to finish this column before the power goes out" which is simply ridiculous.

Lots of ridiculous stuff happened in national sports last week. Let's look at a few eyebrow raisers.

Jose Canseco has a book coming out appropriately enough on April Fool's Day, "Vindicated: Big Names, Big Liars, and The Battle to Save Baseball," which raises the question, who is the fool to buy that book?

Slime sunk to a new low when Canseco says he introduced A-Rod to a steroids pusherman yet produced no proof that his fellow Miami native ever used steroids and then registered another new low when he wrote that A-Rod lusted for his wife. Yes, the same beautiful woman that Canseco was arrested for assaulting and later divorced. I would not be surprised if the juicer needs to unashamedly peddle his book to pay her off.

A radio show in Miami asked Jose Juicer for a telephone interview. He wanted a thousand bucks or he wouldn't go on air. Ridunkulous. Of course, the radio show said no.

The San Francisco Giants are taking all images of Barry Bonds out of the stadium. The only reminder of his historic home run record will be a plaque where his final home run landed. He goes from being the face of the franchise to faceless at AT&T stadium. The Giants move to erase Bonds from the collective memory of fans reminds me of the good ol' days when the Soviets would take people out of history books when they fell out of Communist favor.

Don't look now but the Giants batting lineup when they open next week has to be one of the worst since the War, far worse than even the Royals. The G-Men used all their regular starters and ace pitcher and lost to their Triple A minor league team last week. Ridunkulous.

MLB's decision to open the season in Japan was more than curious, it was a brazen commercial slap at American fans who deserve to have the season open in their own parks. Opening Day of baseball is traditionally a big deal. And it was in Tokyo with sell-outs. Oak-

## OFF THE BENCH

By BOB COLDEEN

Coldeen is a veteran sports journalist in the CNMI and is the sports director of Flame Tree TV.



land fans who had to get up at 3am to watch their team could say MLB sold them out.

My own appreciation for seeing the games on primetime television here notwithstanding, it's ridiculous for teams to open the regular season and then go play exhibition games before playing more official games.

Once the season starts, the games should all be official. Instead, we see the earliest opening season in 132 years. And I thought the season was long enough already. Simply ridiculous.